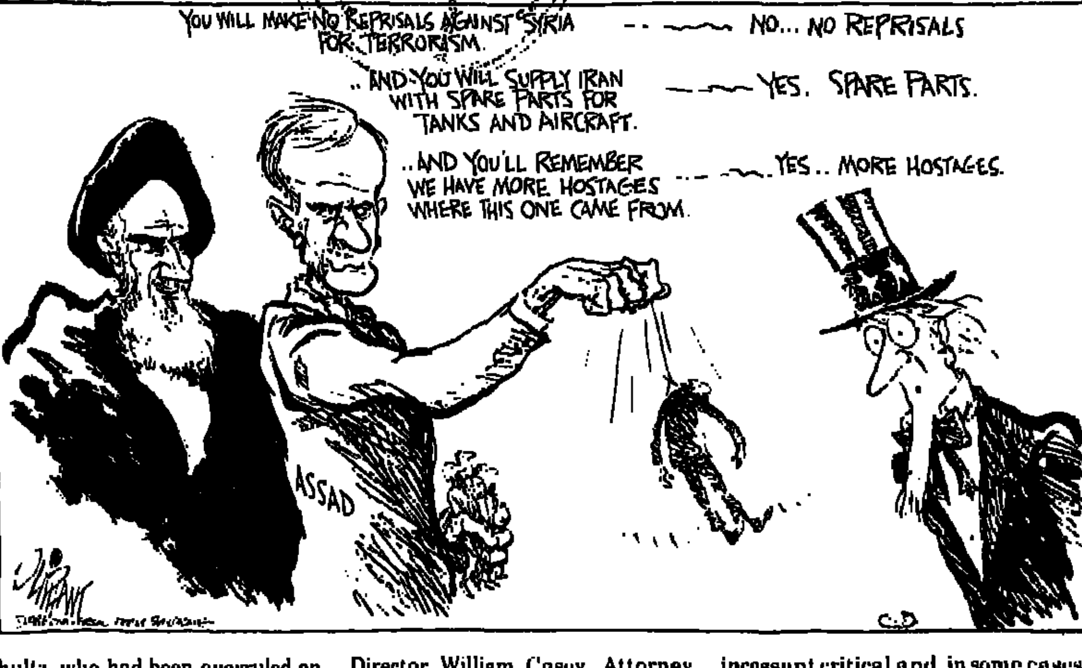
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THE GUARDIAN WEEKLY

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US arms-for-hostages deal backfires



WHAT was "unthinkable" a week ago — that the United States would do a deal with Iran to supply arms in exchange for the release of *American hostages in Lebanon* — turns out this week not only to be thinkable but to have been thought up and put into effect as long ago as the TWA airliner hijack to Beirut in June 1985. Disclosure of the secret deals has embarrassed the White House, split the Administration, and caused cynical amusement among some Europeans, especially the French.

When the TWA airliner with 39 Americans aboard was hijacked to Beirut by Shia Moslems, President Reagan and his top aides turned to an unlikely quarter — Iran. It was Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani, the Speaker of Iran's parliament and a top lieutenant of the Ayatollah Khomeini, who finally engineered the release of the hostages.

Mr Robert McFarlane

Rafsanjani's success marked a turning point in a still more astonishing twist of U.S. policy: a decision by Reagan to violate his own strict policies against shipping arms to Iran, which was on his own list of countries that supported terrorism. From then on, the National Security Council in the White House maintained a clandestine operation for supplying military equipment to Khomeini's radical Islamic regime, which needed it for its war with Iraq.

That extraordinary operation, in turn, apparently led to the release *over the last 14 months of three of* the American hostages who had been held for months by Islamic terrorists in Lebanon. But if the arms deal resulted in freedom for three Americans, it has also left the administration's anti-terrorism policy in confusion. And, it has infuriated U.S. allies that had agreed to cut back their own arms sales to Iran.

For all its global ramifications, *it was an operation developed and* conducted in utmost secrecy. During it all, Reagan never gave so much as a hint of what was going on. He even bypassed the CIA to avoid the mandatory disclosure of such a covert operation to Congress, with the agreement of CIA director William Casey.

"Let me . . . make it plain," he said at the time of the TWA hostage crisis, "that America will *never make concessions to terror*ists. To do so would only invite more terrorism. Nor will we ask nor pressure any other government to do so. Once we head down that path, there will be no end to it — no end to the suffering of innocent people, no end to the *bloody ransom all civilized nations* must pay."

But even then, secret talks were under way with Iran. The resulting arms deal, in which Israel bought spare parts for planes and missiles and covertly shipped them on to Iran, was run directly from the White House because officials wanted to keep the operation secret from Congress and the public. The deal threw top Reagan *aides including* Mr Robert C. McFarlane, his top national security adviser until late last year, into the middle of a murky network of Iranian and Israeli arms dealers. At one point, Rafsanjani said, McFarlane himself turned up in Tehran with a false Irish passport, a Bible autographed by Reagan and a cake and a brace of pistols as a gift for Iran's leaders.

But the deal also created deep cleavages within the administration. Secretary of State George P. Shultz, who had been overruled on the use, said last week: "I think the policy of not negotiating for hostages is the right policy." There was even talk of him resigning. "This is a major disaster for the United States," said a senior Shultz aide who objected to the *operation when it was first pro*posed "It has left us with no coherent policy on terrorism at all."

Rafsanjani, in a speech last week, said that McFarlane was arrested at Tehran International Airport as soon as he announced *who he was and asked to meet* with Iranian President Ali Khamenei. McFarlane and White House officials have refused to comment. But other reports from Iran suggested that McFarlane was somehow recognized by radical militiamen. According to one unconfirmed account, militants besieged the hotel where he was being held under house arrest.



[Reports pages 6, 11, 15, 16]

The story of McFarlane's trip *found its way* into a Syrian-sponsored news magazine in Beirut, which suggested that members of Rafsanjani's faction in Tehran held talks with the American. Rafsanjani, apparently recognizing the political danger of any link to the United States, quickly denied that account and said that he had ordered McFarlane's arrest.

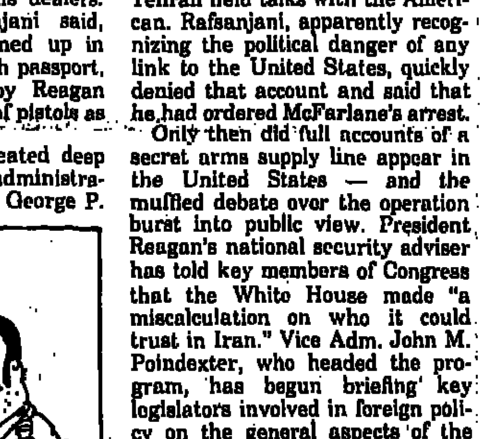
Only then did full accounts of a secret arms supply line appear in the United States — and the muffled debate over the operation burst into public view. President Reagan's national security adviser has told key members of Congress that the White House made "a miscalculation on who it could trust in Iran." Vice Adm. John M. Poindexter, who headed the program, has begun briefing key legislators involved in foreign policy on the general aspects of the *effort*.

President Reagan held a meeting in the Oval Office on Monday on the issue with Shultz, Mr Weinberger, the Defense Secretary, also said to have opposed the deal, Vice President Bush, CIA Director William Casey, Attorney General Edwin Meese, chief of staff Donald Regan, Poindexter and his deputy, Alton G. Keel. In a statement presidential spokesman Larry Speakes said Reagan, at the meeting, discussed efforts to gain release of the remaining *hostages*. Speakes *stressed* that the advisers were "unanimous" in supporting Reagan. Shultz, en route to Guatemala for a meeting of the Organisation of American States, told reporters he has "no plans to resign." Mr Reagan said, according to Speakes, that no U.S. laws "have or will be violated and that our policy of not making concessions to terrorists remains intact."

Well, you could have fooled the French. The Government in Paris, buffeted by the American press in recent weeks for allegedly negotiating with terrorist governments, expressed satisfaction that the Reagan administration is now accused of doing the same. French Foreign Minister Jean-Bernard Raimond commented: "After the incessant critical and, in some cases, hardly tolerable attacks against France, especially in the Anglo-American press, I note with satisfaction that others now find themselves vulnerable and perhaps more vulnerable than we are."

In London, however, official reaction was much different. A spokesman for the Foreign Office told a group of American correspondents: "The administration has denied its involvement and we accept that, so for the moment your questions on this entire issue are hypothetical. We have never been in the hostage-swapping game, and I doubt we ever shall be."

With the US temporarily out of *the running in the fight against* terrorism it was left to the Europeans this week to agree on a package of measures against Syria. French support for the measures did not prevent the freeing of two French hostages in Lebanon who were taken to Damascus to be handed over to the French Embassy there on Tuesday.



Cartoon by Plantu in Le Monde

COMMENT

Abducted to Israel

SEARCHING questions need to be renewed in Parliament about how Mr Mordechai Vanunu came to disappear from London on September 30 and reappear in an Israeli prison. Downing Street has flatly denied that it was informed of any intention to seek his return. The Foreign Office's man in Tel Aviv is asking questions. But return he did, obviously against his will. The affair bears a striking, if so far superficial, resemblance to that in which the Nigerian Dr Umaru Dikko was found on July 5, 1984, drugged in a crate at Stanstead Airport (with an Israeli anaesthetist at his side) awaiting shipment to Lagos. The Nigerians' big mistake was not to ensure that the crate was part of their diplomatic baggage, for if it had been it could not have been opened.

Mr Vanunu disappeared a week before his disclosures about the Israeli nuclear weapons programme at Dimona, in the Negev Desert, appeared in the Sunday Times. That newspaper took a little time to check his detailed and circumstantial account, which makes Israel an even more substantial nuclear power than had previously been suspected. Word obviously reached the Israeli authorities before the story appeared and someone on their behalf, who must surely be part of the Mossad intelligence service, secured his abduction to Israel.

If the Prime Minister and Foreign Secretary were not themselves told by Israeli sources of the intended abduction, was there some connivance by the British security services? In that case were British ministers aware beforehand from non-Israeli sources, which is a question not covered in the denials? Or was the whole episode conducted under the seal of diplomatic immunity without any British cooperation? Unless Mr

Continued on page 10

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Learning America's vocabulary

To your editorial reflections (November 9) about "President Reagan's America" being a country increasingly strange and foreign to us, may I add these thoughts about what that must mean for our alleged special relationship with it?

That some sort of special relationship existed in the past and that it sometimes worked to our national advantage as well as that of the US can scarcely be doubted. Whether and in what form it has continued since the fifties, and whether it any longer works to our advantage are questions that have for many years been debatable, though not as much or as publicly debated as they should have been.

What seems to demand attention now is the possibility that although this relationship can no longer mean much in its old sense to us, it may take on a new life in a different sense in America.

"Reagan's America" in its nationalistic and self-righteous *Weltmachismo* seems unlikely to understand a special relationship in any but a one-sided way as meaning that the country thus related can be relied on to tag along in its train and to suffer gladly, if need be, on its behalf.

Understanding this new US is, as you say, going to take a lot of time and labour, a useful step is simply to realise that our old shared political vocabulary can no longer be relied on.

(Dr) Geoffrey Best,
London School of Economics.

Your leader "America baffles Europe" (November 9) is far more understandable if we remember what happens to most great powers when they slide into inevitable and painful decline.

As other nations are seen to be pulling the eagle's feathers or tweaking the lion's tail, pride is hurt and superiority challenged. From there it is only a small step to the simplistic and artificially reassuring nationalism of Reagan.

The British should easily recognise this process. Or have we already forgotten the Dreadnought battleships and the cry of "We want eight and we won't wait," or "Fog in the Channel, Europe isolated." Sadly and ominously it took a world war to change these attitudes.

Clive Soley, MP,
(Labour Spokesman on Home Affairs),
House of Commons.

Remember another Gulag prisoner

In the Guardian Weekly, (October 12), you publish a picture of a much aged and emaciated Dr Yuri Orlov, taken on his arrival in the US after serving seven years' hard labour in a Gulag camp.

Still a prisoner in a Gulag camp in Perm (north-eastern USSR), greatly in need of support from Western public opinion and the media is Dr Anatoly Koryagin MD, one of the members of Orlov's Helsinki Monitoring Group, who was able to send to the West a substantial number of reports on abuse of psychiatry for political purposes in the USSR. Koryagin was the last member of this group to be arrested, in spring 1981, and was sentenced in June that year to seven years in a hard labour camp. (The sentence has since been prolonged).

Since then he has been in hard labour camps alternating with camp prisons, "SHIZO" cells (solitary confinement cells where food — thin gruel — is served only every other day). With the help of courageous friends he was able to send a letter addressed to the UN Commission on Human Rights and the WHO, describing the horrific conditions and inhuman treatment he and other prisoners are undergoing in these camps.

Dr Koryagin is still serving his sentence. His eldest son, after refusing to disavow his father, was arrested on trumped-up charges of hooliganism and sentenced to two years of hard labour; he is now in another camp if he has not been "amnestied", as a rumour said, to do his military service — in Afghanistan, one wonders?

Dr Koryagin has deserved well of the Free World, of anybody hoping to be permitted to live in a world where people who dare to stick to their convictions, religious, political or otherwise, are not imprisoned, kept rotting in camps and "Special Psychiatric Hospitals" in subhuman conditions, subjected to physical torture, starvation and purposeful destruction of their mental capacities.

For Dr Koryagin the only help can come from the support of the Western World, in the cases of Irina Grivnina (released in autumn 1985), Anatoly Shcharansky, Yuri Orlov and others.

A. Somersalo,
00250 Helsinki.

Richest hillbilly

You describe the richest man in America, Mr Sam Walton, (October 26) as being from "Texas and the Deep South". He is from neither. He lives at Bentonville, Arkansas. That is about as far from Texas, both spiritually and geographically, as London is from Londonderry. Mr Walton is an Ozark Mountains hillbilly. His fellow hillbillies are proud of him and do not like to see him libelled as a Texan. As for Deep South, that describes neither Texas nor the Ozarks.

Roy Reed,
West Fork,
Hogeye, Arkansas.

Oh for an Eisenhower!

Has no one yet noticed the interesting mirror-image presented by our two oldest presidents — Eisenhower and Reagan, Republicans both? The issue came to me as I read David Holbrook's letter "The American fantasy of salvation" (October 26).

Ike was our last worst communicator. He was the constant butt of the most painful satiric attacks, those which did no more than quote his unprepared remarks, exposing the highest degree of linguistic ineptitude. He seemed at the time to be the only man who would never, ever learn not to say "nucular", and when we weren't jibing at him, we were wincing for him. Gerald Ford stumbled. Ike garbled. The popular impression, of course, was that Ford had problems of locomotion, Eisenhower of intellection.

But now we have Reagan, the great well-rehearsed one, whose spokespeople are always on the mop-up brigade after his extemporising. Yet no one seems to suppose that an aberrant nonfact here or there really reveals the quality of his mind. He is credited by his enemies (such as Mr Holbrook) with "deranged fantasies," even "idiocy", for believing in the great Maginot Line in the sky.

No, he's not an idiot, not deranged. He's stupid, naive, inconsistent, an opportunistic temporiser, with no principles beyond sentimental adoration of the simplicities he has always ignorantly supposed to represent moral values. He has the suave, avuncular manner to conceal the hollowness within, and the smugness of his convictions. Oh for an Eisenhower whose every word disclosed a mind that could think, however tentatively it reached its conclusions, however awkwardly they were expressed, and a moral sense honed in a career of knowing evil and fighting it!

If the greatest danger we now face is miscalculation and misjudgment, are we not at present in constant peril of the decisions of a blockhead? Surely it would be better to have a President say "uh-uh-uh" rather than "charge!" May he doze and nap in peace for two more years, and may we be spared many moments of his wakeful alertness.

Thomas R. Arp,
Southern Methodist University,
Dallas.

Wrong fixer

James Naughtie writes a good piece (November 2) but he is wrong about Gatsby: It was Meyer Wolfsheim who fixed the World Series in 1919.

Gatsby comes across as a good egg in the end, and Nick Carraway's shouted goodbye to him, "They're a rotten crowd . . . you're worth the whole damn bunch put together," is poignant.

Bob Ashdown,
Milton Keynes,
Buckinghamshire.

A warm welcome for USN

The letter from Janet Fischer, of the Sydney Eastern Suburbs Nuclear Disarmament Group, (October 12) cannot go unchallenged. Her assertion that visits by "nuclear armed warships are not welcome in Australian ports" is in flat contradiction of the observable facts. The recent visit of the warships for the Naval Review to celebrate the Royal Australian Navy's 75th Birthday was a huge success. Some 100,000 spectators were expected, but in the event over a quarter of a million turned out, causing problems for the police and transport authorities.

My wife and I sailed round the fleet in a small ferry on the day of the review. Every vantage point around Sydney's long shoreline was packed with enthusiastic crowds. The tiny group of protesters occupying the tip of one promontory was scarcely noticeable. Next day thousands jammed the dockside to tour the US battleship Missouri and the other ships.

Janet Fischer quotes Admiral Martin's initial broadcast, but not his immediate correction. He meant to say: "It is *not* inevitable that these ships will be carrying nuclear weapons." He confessed later to a slip of the tongue when faced with the television cameras.

Allan Woolford,
Quarter Sessions Rd,
Sydney.

Not having such a good day

Presenters of news programmes, newsreaders and weather-forecasters are gradually adopting the American habit of signing off with "Have a good evening!" or "Have a good weekend!"

Am I the only person to find this practice nauseatingly insincere and unnecessary? If not I urge my fellow-sufferers to protest now. Unless they do we shall find the meaningless affection firmly installed.

Derek Roberts,
Mitcham, Surrey.

Crime to smell

A man who had been sitting quietly reading a book in Charing Cross Road library was dragged out in handcuffs by four policemen. His crime, according to the chief librarian, was that he smelled.

I know a number of smelly people. Does our police state extend this useful service to private individuals?

Keith Clarke,
London SW12.

Stopped at the border

In the light of your reports on the discretion, or the lack of it, shown by British immigration officials: I arrived on my 50th visit to the UK in the last 23 years, at Newcastle on the ferry from Norway, where I am a permanent resident. I was registered for a course at Southampton University and had papers to prove it. I was driving my Norwegian-registered car, had an unlimited Norwegian residence permit stamped in my passport and had a return ticket for the next Saturday on the same ferry.

I was informed, regretfully it was said, that the immigration officials had no discretion to allow me in.

I am a Sri Lankan.

(Dr) S. R. de Silva,
Ytre Lasevag, Norway.

James Lewis should get his facts straight as regards the visas for Indian visitors issue. As an Australian resident with a British passport who wishes to take a three-day stopover in Bombay soon, I also have to obtain a visa (costing me $25.90, but costing Australian passport holders only $6). I also have to supply three passport photos and a letter from my nearest British consulate supporting my visa application.

I suggest Mr Lewis wipes away his tears and looks towards India if he wants to see racism at its best.

A. Simons,
Brisbane Avenue,
Camp Hill,
Brisbane.

Limited franchise

Can anyone tell us why the recent extension of the franchise to expatriates was limited to those whose residence abroad has not exceeded five years?

I was born in England of an English family over 70 years ago and until 1971 resided continuously. In that year my Australian born wife and I with our young family decided to emigrate to New South Wales to be near her family whom she had not seen for many years. We retained our British citizenship throughout 13 years' Australian residence. In 1984 we determined to return home, but discovering as pensioners we could not afford the inflated cost of living, let alone the cost of even the smallest British properties, we settled for northern Spain where we now reside.

I am sure there must be many other British subjects who for equally valid reasons are forced to live abroad, and like us are puzzled and indignant at our exclusion because we left our home land over five years ago.

Roger Milton,
Santa Cristina de Aro,
Gerona.

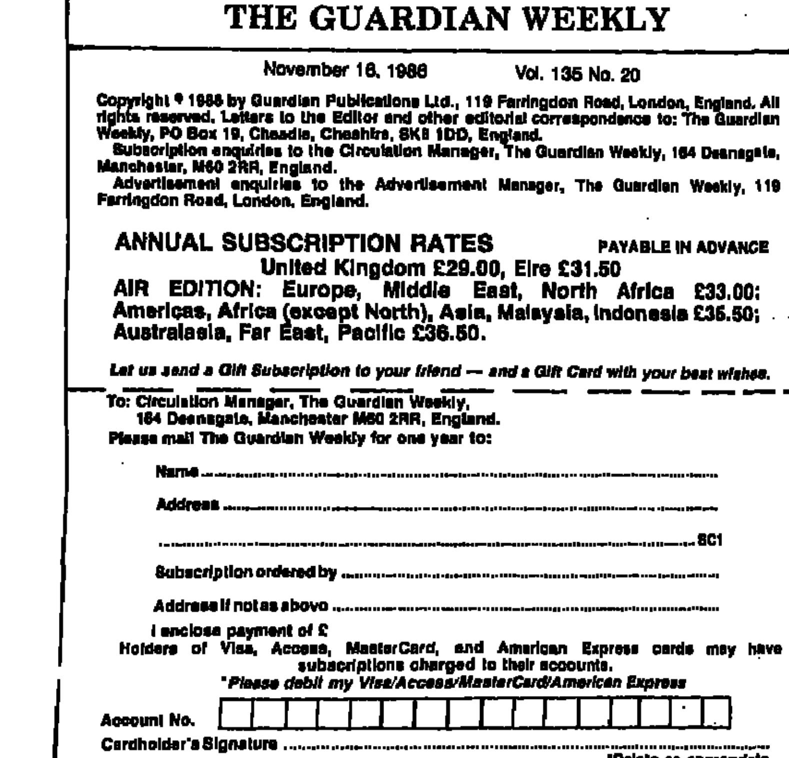
Double standards in ballet

Is it because all the male members of the Chinese Ballet are over some magic age that they have earned the right to be called men, and is it because all the female members of the same company are below this age that they are referred to as (mere) girls (Mary Clarke's Review, "Stylish Dancing From China," October 19)?

It is distressing to rediscover that patronising double standards with respect to gender differences are alive and well.

Further, in a review of so highly acclaimed a ballet company, one might hope for more comments on the dancing skills of the corps de ballet than the prettiness or beauty of the "girls".

Helen Paulucci,
Port Kembla,
NSW.



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THE WEEK IN BRITAIN

Lawson package signals early election

by James Lewis

THE new session of Parliament which opened this week is firmly believed by members of all parties to be the last before a General Election. Though Mrs Thatcher does not have to go to the country until June, 1988, there is mounting evidence that she will make her bid for a third term next year — possibly in the early spring but more probably in June or October.

The strongest evidence was provided by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Mr Nigel Lawson, who in his autumn economic statement announced that he was prepared to allow public spending to rise next year by an astonishing £7.53 billion. Most of the money will go on health, housing, the police and education. But the Chancellor's recognition of the crying need for extra spending in these areas posed the inevitable question: "If it is right to spend now, why was it not right six years ago?"

Mr Lawson hinted, without being too explicit, that he was merely spending on public services that which might have been available for tax cuts in next year's Budget. It may well turn out, however, that the proceeds from selling off public assets will allow him enough leeway to offer some tax cuts as well. His Labour shadow, Mr Roy Hattersley, who had no choice but to welcome the extra spending, observed acidly that "The sick, the homeless and the parents all wish there could be an election every year."

The public opinion polls provided further grounds for believing that a general election cannot be too far off. Three successive polls have now put the Tories ahead of Labour — two of them by as much as four per cent. Many of the newer Tories are sitting on paper-thin majorities and one senior government source admitted that, if such a lead in the polls can be maintained or increased, the temptation to go to the country could be "more than flesh or blood could stand."

If the polls are to be believed, the voters find Labour's policies on health and education more palatable than the Government's. But on defence, another vital election issue, Labour's unilateralist stance enjoys the support of only one in three electors.

The Tory party chairman, Mr Norman Tebbit, sensing another Opposition weakness, has sent letters to 10,000 people who, last month, bought shares in the privatised British Telecom, warning them that their holdings would be at risk under a Labour government.

By the time British Gas has been sold off later this year, there could be as many as ten million shareholders in what were once nationalised industries who could be persuaded that they have a financial stake in a Tory victory. Labour has not made many specific commitments about social ownership, as nationalisation is now called, beyond saying that it will replace Telecom shares with interest-bearing bonds. This very vagueness, however, creates fears which Mr Tebbit and his henchmen are well able to exploit.

The Tory chairman is now probably regretting his intemperate attack on the BBC, which probably lost his party more friends than it gained. There is, however, more than one way of cutting the BBC down to size, and the Home Secretary, Mr Douglas Hurd, hinted at one of them this week when he said the Government was considering the introduction of a "pay per view" system to replace the BBC's licence fee.

The licence fee had been a natural way of funding broadcasting in the past, said Mr Hurd. But circumstances were changing. In the next 10 or 15 years, the growth of cable and satellite programmes would give viewers a much wider choice, which was why new methods of funding had to be examined. While Mr Hurd's reasoning may be sound enough, the kind of changes he envisages would almost certainly result in a sizeable cut in the BBC's guaranteed income, and hence limit its nuisance value to politians.

The Confederation of British Industry crossed swords with the Prime Minister when, at its annual conference, it called on the Government to take Britain into full membership of the European Monetary System "without further delay." Mrs Thatcher has no time for the EMS, which would tie sterling into closer relationship with other EEC currencies. Other ministers, who view the scheme more favourably, say "the time is not yet ripe" for joining.

"The time is now surely ripe" said Mr John Raisman, chairman of the CBI's Europe Committee. "Full membership of the EMS would lead to lower interest rates, less exchange rate volatility, and a climate of greater confidence for industry to invest to develop exports. It would also be an important sign of our belief that we are now fully paid-up members of the European Community."

Protestant paramilitary groups in Northern Ireland issued an ultimatum to the Irish Government that if it does not stop operating the Anglo-Irish agreement within a week they would plant bombs throughout the Irish Republic to cause "maximum carnage." The ultimatum followed a number of small explosions in Dublin, in which nobody was hurt. The Ulster Freedom Fighters — the outlawed terrorist wing of the Ulster Defence Association — claimed responsibility.

Loyalists have not taken their battle to Dublin since 1974, when an abortive attempt was made to set up a power-sharing executive in Northern Ireland. On that occasion, 23 people died and 100 were injured in three explosions timed to coincide with the the Ulster Workers' Council strike which brought about the downfall of the executive.

FOREIGN EXCHANGES

	Sterling Rates November 10	Previous Closing Rates
Australia	2.2235-2.2250	2.2100-2.2200
Austria	20.69-20.72	20.75-20 77
Belgium	61.04-61 16	61.20-61.30
Canada	1.9931-1.9959	1.9792-1 9821
Denmark	11.08-11.09	11.08-11 10
France	9.60-9.61	9 80-9.82
Germany	2.93-2.94	2 94-2.95
Hong Kong	11 22-11.23	11 12-11 13
Ireland	1.0770-1.0780	1 0793-1.0803
Italy	2,028-2,034	2,034-2,038
Japan	233.75-234.10	232 74-233.12
Netherlands	3 31-3 32	3.32-3 33
Norway	10 76-10 78	10 72-10 74
Portugal	215.20-216.10	214.83-215.70
Spain	196 35-196.65	196.93-197 21
Sweden	10.03-10 04	10.01-10.03
Switzerland	2 43-2.44	2 45-2.46
USA	1.4370-1.4380	1.4270-1.4380
ECU	1.4048-1.4066	1.4113-1 4131

FT 30 Share Index 1313·3 Gold $410·75

$/£ (1.40–1.50; OCTOBER, NOV)

FTSE 100 INDEX (1450–1750; AUGUST, SEPTEMBER, OCTOBER, NOV)

PM's warning over cuts in missiles

THE Prime Minister this week warned President Reagan that Europe still saw itself dependent on nuclear weapons for its defence, and that the United States had to listen closely to its Nato partners before agreeing to deep cuts with the Soviet Union.

Mrs Thatcher used her speech at the Lord Mayor's banquet in the City to make clear her worries about ballistic-missile cuts, and about the need to tie negotiated reductions in nuclear weaponry with conventional cuts.

"We can never forget that the frontier of freedom cuts right across our continent, and renders Western Europe vulnerable to attack by conventional forces and chemical weapons in a way which the United States is not," she said.

Nuclear weapons had prevented war — nuclear and conventional — for 40 years, she said. "That is why we depend and will continue to depend on nuclear weapons for our defence."

Mrs Thatcher flies to Washington at the weekend for talks with Mr Reagan at Camp David, when

By James Naughtie

she apparently intends to discuss her worries about moving quickly towards a zero-zero strategic missile deal. She said she wanted the number of weapons to be reduced but added: "Nuclear weapons cannot be disinvented."

She quoted Churchill, saying it was necessary to keep nuclear weapons until other means of preserving peace were in your hands. "Other means are not yet at hand and we should do well to heed his wisdom," she said.

In the rest of the speech Mrs Thatcher gave no hint of her thinking on election timing — though her colleagues are convinced that she would not consider embarking on a campaign until after the fourth anniversary of her last victory. She did, however, lay out the economic themes which will be the heart of that campaign.

The autumn spending announcements last week were no spending spree, she insisted. The Government insisted that public spending should be "honestly financed" and it would continue to fall as a proportion of national income.

Chris Hawkins salutes Sir Gordon Richards, who died on Monday, aged 82

King of the knight riders

SIR GORDON RICHARDS, the legendary knight of the turf, is dead and racing has lost not only one of its finest jockeys but one of its best ambassadors.

Throughout this life Gordon was renowned as a man of honesty, integrity and kindness whose fame never allowed him to forget his origins — he was one of 12 children, four of whom died in infancy, born to Nathan and Elizabeth Richards in the Shropshire mining village of Oakengates at the turn of the century.

Indeed Gordon's background was always at the forefront of his mind and at the retirement dinner given for him at the Savoy Hotel in 1954 he began an emotional speech by saying: "Ninety-nine per cent of us start from very humble surroundings. In my opinion one thing is of paramount importance — set a good example wherever you go, everything is up to you." It was a good philosophy Gordon followed to the letter.

As a rider he will always be regarded as one of the immortal triumvirate, including Archer and Piggott. But whereas the other two came from families steeped in racing Gordon did not. His father was a minor and so Gordon's exceptional talent or to be more accurate, genius, was all the more remarkable.

He left school at 13 failing, so the story goes, by one mark to pass the examination for Newport Grammar School. A waif of a lad, his mother was adamant he should not go down the mines and instead a job was found for him in a warehouse. He stuck it for two years before answering a local paper advertisement for a stable lad with Martin Hartingan at Foxhill near Swindon.

From the moment he alighted at Foxhill after his first ever motor-car ride from Swindon station he loved the life — the glories of the bracing early mornings on the Wiltshire Downs, the glorious dignity of the thoroughbred, and the thrill of riding; all that plus five shillings a week. Gordon could not believe his luck.

Neither could his guvnor when he saw how the young apprentice began to progress. Gordon had natural hands through which he established an immediate empathy with his mounts but being short and thick in the leg and body he also had great strength.

Success did not come straight away — he finished unplaced on his very first mount Clock-Work at Lingfield in 1920 — but it was not long delayed. The first time the name G. Richards appeared in the newspapers' results column beside a winner was in April 1921 after Gay Lord had won the Apprentice Plate at Leicester. Thereafter the name appeared another 4,869 times, making him easily the most successful jockey in the history of the turf in this country while the 269 winners he rode in a season in 1947 set another record.



Sir Gordon Richards

He rode 14 classic winners but the Derby remained strangely elusive until Pinza did the trick for him in 1953, shortly before he was knighted.

After he hung up his boots he began training in 1955. But although fairly successful, his kindly nature perhaps prevented him from giving horses the necessary hard preparation and he was never as good at training as he had been at riding. In 1970 he retired and became racing manager to Sir Michael Sobell and Lady Beaverbrook. It was in this capacity that I met him one morning at the Chequers Hotel at Newbury while researching a book on Lady Beaverbrook's Bustino. He arrived, walking with quick, short bandy strides, immaculately dressed as always in a suit and shining brown shoes. The trilby hat on his head looking disproportionately large. He had bought the champion Bustino for Lady Beaverbrook as a yearling but characteristically claimed none of the credit, giving it all to trainer Dick Hern. From that point of view the interview was disappointing but I shall never forget the magical aura of the man. There was something special about him and I thought no wonder the horse took notice, recalling what that celebrated writer Jack Leach had said about him: "Most good jockeys can make a horse run without punishing him; they send messages down the reins. Gordon Richards used to threaten his horses with everything in a tight finish, and by God they listened to him!"

CLASSIFIED

CARS

Forty-five die in Shetland helicopter crash

By Jean Stead and Paul Keel

FORTY-FIVE men were killed last week when their Chinook helicopter plunged into the North Sea off the Shetland Islands while carrying oil workers from the Brent Field.

There were only two survivors out of the aircraft's 44 passengers and three crew. It was the worst helicopter accident in civil aviation history.

The helicopter was on a scheduled flight to Sumburgh airport on the southernmost tip of the Shetlands, ferrying Shell oil workers who had just completed two weeks' duty on the Brent Charlie and Brent Delta platforms in the North Sea. It was about two miles and one minute's flying time from the airport and already beginning its descent when contact was lost with it at about 11.43am. Miraculously for the two survivors — the Chinook's co-pilot and an oil worker — a Sumburgh coastguard helicopter had just taken off from the airport on a rescue training flight.

Within a minute's flight out to sea, the crew aboard the coastguard helicopter spotted an oil slick two miles out. "The flight crew and two winchmen then saw bodies popping up out of the water's surface," a spokesman for Bristow Helicopters said. "None of them appeared to have their life jackets tied around their necks, which suggests that whatever happened was sudden and catastrophic."

All North Sea oil workers aboard helicopters are required to wear survival suits and to keep their life jackets always attached to their waists. The jackets would only be fitted over the passengers' heads if the pilot so ordered. The helicopter crew did not appear to have had time to transmit a May Day message to Sumburgh airport.

The Chinook belonged to the British International Helicopter Company, which was purchased two months ago by Mr Robert Maxwell from British Airways.

The Civil Aviation Authority revealed that the same Chinook was forced to crashland at a rural Aberdeenshire airport in 1983 when smoke filled the cabin after a gearbox fire. Boeing, the makers, later modified the gearbox.

The Chinook is the largest of the helicopters operating in the North Sea and carries hundreds of thousands of offshore workers every year. Its large fuel tanks and capabilities mean that it can take oil workers from Aberdeen to the rigs and back without refuelling. A spokesman for the Offshore Survival School at Aberdeen said it was a miracle anyone had survived from the crash, in which the Chinook appears to have plunged at speed from 500 feet.

Marquess gets suspended prison sentence

THE Marquess of Blandford was last week given a two-year prison sentence, suspended for two years, after he had admitted possessing cocaine.

The 30-year-old heir to the Blenheim Palace fortune, which is estimated at £60 million, spent more than £20,000 on the drug during the three months before his arrest on December 13 last year, when police found him in a squalid users' den in Edgware Road, London.

The Marquess, who appeared at Knightsbridge Crown Court as Charles James Spencer Churchill, reduced himself to a physical and mental wreck with his whole life revolving around his next fix. He was placed under a supervision order for two years and ordered to pay £2,000 towards the prosecution costs.

"It is quite awful to see someone like you, with so many of the material advantages of this world, plead guilty to this offence," said Judge Henry Pownall, QC.

"Nobody can fail to have pity on someone addicted to any drug and it is quite plain to me that you have hit rock bottom.

"But you had the willpower, with the help of others, to try and rid yourself of the scourge which was ruining your life and which is quite plainly causing unimaginable distress to those who care about you."

A better class of hole

By Martin Wainwright

THE ancient mansions of England have been joined on the Government's list of historic buildings by the country's first stately hole. The 8ft-deep pit on a Somerset farmer's land has been given a grade two listing because of its romantic links with the early days of the gas industry.

Mr Duncan Stafford, who farms 150 acres at St Audries, near Williton in Somerset, was prepared for bureacratic delays when he submitted a plan to build a sports complex on part of his land. But he was startled when industrial history, rather than landscape or nature conservation, proved to be the stumbling block.

"I was told the hole was of great historic value," he said. "I was absolutely flabbergasted." Planning officials explained that the pit, which is 20 feet wide, was part of a pioneering gasworks built in 1855. Swampy and overgrown, it once formed the base of an ancient and unusual gasometer connected to two derelict buildings which stand nearby.

A spokesman for the Department of the Environment, which has added the hole to the kennels, lavatories and other items in the curiosities sub-section of its list, agreed that the "sunken structure" was unusual.

Archer to sue

MR JEFFREY ARCHER, the former Conservative Party deputy chairman, is to sue the News of the World and the Daily Star newspapers for libel. Mr Archer resigned after allegations in the News of the World that using an intermediary, he had tried to pay prostitute Miss Monica Coghlan £2,000 to go abroad in order to avoid a scandal.

Tebbit refuels row with BBC

By Peter Fiddick

THE confrontation between Mr Norman Tebbit and the BBC flared again last week as the chairman of the Conservative Party tore into the rebuttal of his previous criticisms which the BBC had issued earlier in the day.

He accused the BBC of "an extraordinary exercise in statistical gymnastics," of changing the words used in the original disputed broadcast, and "of making a convincing defence against the charges we did not make."

The speed and force of the counter-attack surprised even Mr Tebbit's own party members, some of whom, including Cabinet colleagues, thought he had already gone too far in pushing his criticisms through the Conservative Central Office (CCO) document published the previous week.

The BBC's response to the Conservative Party's accusations over its coverage of the American bombing in Libya acknowledges only one error out of 41 complaints, the linking of the Hindawi bomb plot with the raid.

"There are 40 other complaints, all of which are rejected out of hand," the director-general of the BBC, Mr Alasdair Milne, said. Mr Ron Neil, editor of BBC Television News, who led the team of four journalists who prepared the 24-page response, said they had been meticulous in covering every point raised in the Conservative document.



Mr Norman Tebbit

The BBC says that 31 of the Tory charges are not true. Its comments on five others are: "seriously misleading," "we disagree," "this is tendentious," "we reject this in the strongest terms," and "we reject this."

Conservative Central Office charges that words and phrases used in the first BBC broadcast on the American raid — "across the world there is great concern," "deaths and injuries to men, women and children as they slept in their homes," "Colonel Gadafy's own family was hit" — were "designed to arouse anti-American emotion." The BBC "rejects in the strongest terms that its words and phrases were 'designed' to do anything other than state the objective facts of the situation."

The opening words of a disputed broadcast — "Britain is paying the price for supporting America's attack on Libya" — are described as "a prejudicial and emotive piece of opinion." The BBC records that three dead bodies in Lebanon had a note pinned to them, that the British ambassador's residence had been attacked, and the British journalist John McCathy had been abducted: "That night, Britain was certainly 'paying the price'."

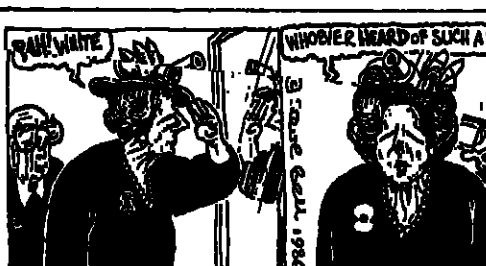
Information that one of Colonel Gadafy's children had been buried was "totally justified editorally."

One of the central Conservative charges was that the BBC made the "principal feature" of its news the " 'worldwide condemnation' of America — a subjective and emotive description which is repeated but never substantiated throughout the broadcast."

The BBC says: "Not true — the phrase 'worldwide condemnation' was thoroughly substantiated during the broadcast." John Simpson, the diplomatic editor, had reported that only Canada, Israel and Britain supported the action.

He cited counter-views from France, West Germany, Spain, and noted that a UN Security Council debate would bring more opposition.

That evening, China, India, the OAU, and the entire non-aligned movement joined the condemnation. "Altogether about 100 countries through the world were to associate themselves with condemnation of the raid.





White poppies at Cenotaph

By David Pallister

SHORT memories and exceptional security marked Remembrance Day at the Cenotaph on Sunday. The sudden furore this year over the Peace Pledge Union's white poppies, which Mrs Thatcher viewed "with distaste," did not prevent the white wreath being laid after the main ceremony for the sixth year running, honouring a tradition that goes back to 1933. "When shall we ever learn?" said the message.

There was the usual National Front march of mainly army-booted skinheads. Mr Douglas Hurd, the Home Secretary, had urged the Metropolitan Police Commissioner, Sir Kenneth Newman, to try to persuade the National Front to hold their parade on another day, "when it would be less offensive." As it was, they carried their banner, "No more brothers war," apparently a slogan of fraternal sympathy with the armies of the Reich.

The Front were kept well away from the much larger Anti-Fascist Action march, which went to the Imperial War Museum for a public meeting.

THE WEEK

SOUTH AFRICA'S President [illegible] reshuffle. [illegible] and Order Minister Louis Le Grange has been dropped and former Vice-President Alwyn Schlebusche returns to the Cabinet.

Ten new deputy ministerships have been established: a move which could be interpreted as a device to ensure support from MPs of the governing National Party anxious about threats to their seats from the ultra-right Conservative and Herstigte Nasionale parties.

The promotion of top MPs to deputy ministerships coincided with the fall of Deputy Information Minister Louis Nel, who, President Botha said, had been offered several posts but was still undecided.

Meanwhile, Soweto residents claimed police, trying to evict rent protesters from their homes, killed five blacks and wounded dozens in two hours of gunfire near the homes of Mrs Winnie Mandela and Mrs Albertina Sisulu. Police said two had died.

At the Supreme Court in Johannesburg, Marion Sparg, the only white woman known to have received military training from the African National Congress army, Umkhonto We Sizwe, was convicted of treason for bombing two police stations and for attempting to bomb a third. She was sentenced to 25 years imprisonment.

MR OLIVER TAMBO, president of the banned South African political organisation, the African National Congress announced on arrival in the Soviet Union that he was seeking weapons on the eve of a new offensive aimed at toppling the Pretoria Government. Mr Tambo describes his meeting with Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev as "historic".

MALAWI has attacked the policies of Zimbabwe and Mozambique following South Africa's allegations that they had plotted to overthrow President Hastings Banda. The allegations were made last week by South Africa's Foreign Minister, Mr Pik Botha, who said they were based on documents found in the Mozambican aircraft which crashed last month, killing President Samora Machel.

Malawi's official news agency, Mana, apparently accepted as valid Pretoria's allegations, saying: "The disclosure about the planned attack on Malawi comes as a great shock to us." The statement repeated Malawi's denial that it supports the South African backed Mozambique National Resistance rebels.

AT LEAST 17 people have been killed, and 60 wounded, in the worst clashes between Palestinians and Shi'ite Muslims in Beirut for six months, police and Palestinian sources said. Palestinian guerrillas and Shi'ite Muslim Amal militiamen exchanged mortar, rocket and machinegun fire at the Bourj-al-Barajneh refugee camp, they said.

CHANCELLOR Helmut Kohl had refused to apologise to the Soviet leader, Mr Mikhail Gorbachev, for comparing him with the Nazi propaganda chief, Joseph Goebbels. Dr Kohl told the Bundestag he [illegible] to insult the Soviet leader, but his remarks had been incorrectly interpreted by Newsweek magazine.

A POLITBURO member, Mr Yegor Ligachev, said this week that the Soviet Union's 1986 grain harvest was expected to reach 210 million tonnes, 30 million tonnes more than the previous five years' average. The US Department of Agriculture had forecast the 1986 Soviet harvest at only 180 million tonnes.

CAPTURED Nazi documents indicate that the military unit of the Austrian President, Dr Kurt Waldheim, was directly responsible for the mass deportation of Yugoslav civilians to concentration camps in 1942.

The documents, held in the US National Archives, show that the quartermaster of the Wehrmacht's Combat Group West Bosnia was responsible for establishing prisoner-collecting points and transferring captives to camps.

Dr Waldheim, who for months denied any involvement in the operation, has acknowledged that he was in the area in the spring and summer of 1942, but that he was a non-combatant "supply officer."

PRESIDENT Hosni Mubarak of Egypt has accepted the resignation of his Prime Minister, Mr Ali Lotfi, and asked Mr Atef Sedki, a little-known economic specialist, to form a new cabinet. The unexpected reshuffle came amid a mounting economic crisis which Mr Lotfi's 14-month Premiership did little to solve.

SPAIN'S Prime Minister, Felipe Gonzalez, says Spanish ships will ignore Britain's planned fishing restrictions around the Falkland Islands.

Spain, which supported Argentina in the 1982 war with Britain, is the EEC country which fishes most in the conservation zone which Britain is to impose within a 150 mile radius of the Falklands from next February.

Its refusal to abide by a British regulation requiring fishing boats to obtain permits could provoke a similar reaction from the Soviet Union, which is a partner in a fleet that is responsible for half the Spanish catch.

INDIA said it was keeping the option of making nuclear weapons "under constant review" in the light of Pakistan's nuclear ambition and the US decision to supply it with advanced weapons.

External Affairs Minister of State, Natwar Singh told Parliament that these developments had brought about a "quantum change" in India's regional security problem. He accused the US of being "consistently wrong" in its reading of the situation in south Asia. *(Pakistani bomb, page 16).*

MORE THAN four years of military rule in Bangladesh ended when President Hussain Ershad lifted martial law immediately following passage of an indemnity bill by Parliament protecting the President and others from prosecution for actions taken under martial law.



Europe acts against Syria

By Derek Brown in London

BRITAIN'S EEC partners shuffled reluctantly into line on Monday to support a modest package of anti-terrorist measures against Syria.

The agreement by 11 of the 12 foreign ministers to ban arms sales, suspend high-level visits, "review the activities" of Syrian diplomats, and tighten security for incoming Syrian passenger flights, fell a good way short of the firm response demanded by Sir Geoffrey Howe.

But it was, for the Government, a marginal improvement on the failure by the same ministers in Luxembourg last week to offer any significant backing to Britain.

As expected, Greece refused to back the final statement from Sir Geoffrey, because it implicitly charged Syria with direct involvement in the Hindawi plot to smuggle a bomb on to an El Al jet at Heathrow.

Mr Teodoros Pangalos, the Greek Deputy Foreign Minister, told reporters that his government did not accept Syria's guilt. He said that Athens had now examined evidence from London and Damascus. He was a politician, not a detective, and he was not prepared to say which version was correct. "All evidence is convincing when it is published," he said.

The French Foreign Minister, Mr Jean-Bernard Raimond, said that the official communique from the British presidency did not explicitly blame the Syrian Government for the April bomb plot. Nevertheless, he said the facts presented by Britain were sufficient for the communique to take measures against Syria.

Ignoring the textual nit-picking, Sir Geoffrey presented the meeting as a further example of EEC resolve to curb terrorism. "We wish to send Syria the clearest possible message that what has happened is absolutely unacceptable," he said.

The official response from Damascus to the charge of involvement had added nothing to the evidence given in the Hindawi trial last month.

"We shall continue to employ all the political means available to us in order to persuade the Syrian authorities to translate into concrete action their stated condemnation of international terrorism. In particular, we call on them to end all forms of support for those groups which have been clearly involved in terrorist acts and to deny them all facilities," he said.

At the insistence of France and other countries which flatly refused to contemplate following Britain into a full diplomatic rift with Damascus, the Foreign Secretary's statement stressed the importance of EEC links with the Middle East nations.

"We strongly reaffirm our commitment to contribute in every way we can to the search for just and lasting solutions to the region's problems," he said.

The Foreign Secretary and other ministers emphatically denied that they had discussed other Middle East developments, such as the Chirac interview in the Washington Times, which was distributed in bulk to the sizeable press corps at the meeting. *(See page 11.)*

Nor were they distracted from the search for an agreed minimalist approach on Syria by the latest wave of speculation about a US arms deal with Iran in exchange for the release of American hostages in Lebanon.

Molotov dead, Stalin's chief fixer

By Michael Simmons

THE central irony of the long life of Vyacheslav Molotov, whose death at the age of 96 was announced in Moscow on Monday, is that few Russians today will probably know his name and even fewer will know of the substantial role he played in the Soviet Union's progress towards the status of super-power.

Outside his own country he will be remembered as the recalcitrant Foreign Minister who took part in so many of the major international conferences after the war, but whose fate was to be thrown out of Nikita Khrushchev's Politburo to become Soviet ambassador in Mongolia. Yet under Stalin he had been Prime Minister for 10 years, and had much to do with the collectivisation of agriculture in the early 1930s and with the great purges in the period immediately afterwards.

When Stalin died in March, 1953, Molotov's standing in the leadership, and in the public eye, where he was recognised as a substantial party and political figure, was such that he was generally accepted as the most likely successor. But it was Khrushchev who succeeded, probably because he was a more adroit schemer. Molotov was more of a conscientious — and apparently unemotional — desk-man than an authority figure who would lead from the front.

His real name was Scriabin, and he was a nephew of the composer of the same name. He was born in March, 1890 near Kirov, about 500 miles east of Moscow, his father being a member of the gentry "reduced" to serving as a shop assistant. By the age of 16 he had joined the Bolsheviks.

By 1917, after a spell with the party underground in Moscow and a spell of exile in Siberia, he was a senior member of the Petrograd Soviet and of Pravda's editorial board.

After the Revolution, he held a number of important posts, dealing with areas which had been affected by the war with Germany and by the civil war, and in 1921 became a Central Committee secretary and a non-voting member of the Politburo.

Molotov was instrumental in promoting Stalin, who became general secretary the following year, and in eliminating possible rivals, including the Zinoviev faction in



Vyacheslev Molotov in his prime

Leningrad in 1925 and the Bukharin faction a year later.

In 1939, he became Foreign Minister, a post he was to hold for a further 10 years, and from 1941 to 1945 was one of Stalin's small executive War Cabinet. He conducted the talks with Hitler which led to the August, 1939 non-aggression pact with Germany (so becoming the only known Soviet leader to have shaken hands with Hitler), and in June, 1942 also had the job of telling the Soviet people that Hitler had invaded their country.

It was during the war that the phrase "Molotov cocktail" came into use for a bottle filled with inflammable liquid that could be used against German tanks. The Hungarians used the same device effectively against Soviet tanks in 1956.

After the war Molotov helped consolidate Soviet interests in Eastern Europe, rejecting and denouncing the Marshall Plan, and engaging in often fruitless negotiations on the future of Germany and on disarmament. There was considerable surprise when it was announced, in March 1949, that he was leaving the Foreign Ministry to concentrate on economic planning.

After Stalin died, he again became Foreign Minister — this time holding the position until shortly after the speech denouncing Stalin had been delivered by Khrushchev to the 20th party congress in 1956. In July, 1957 he was a casualty in Khrushchev's Politburo purge.

In the purge that removed him, he had been denounced — as 20 and more years previously he had denounced others — as one who had "worked against the decisions of the party," who had "obstructed" Stalin's peace policy, and had sought to impose "the wrong ideas." An article submitted by him in 1960 to the theoretical journal, Kommunist, on the worth of Lenin, was not accepted.

In that year, Khrushchev authorised the appointment of Molotov to the co-chairmanship of the International Atomic Energy Agency in Vienna. It was seen at the time as a means of removing from the sensitive and highly political area close to China, then an uncertain ally. When Khrushchev himself went to Vienna in 1961, to meet President Kennedy, his exchanges with Molotov were curt and almost dismissive.

On his return, shortly afterwards, to Moscow, he was dismissed from the party and forfeited many of the privileges his position had earned him. He was readmitted in 1984 on his 94th birthday. But in the words of Svetlana Stalina, he had become "a withered pensioner" and buried himself with his memoirs.

Rhine pollution a major disaster

By Anna Tomforde in Bonn

AS THE toxic stream of chemicals which has affected large sections of the River Rhone flowed into the Netherlands at the weekend, southern Germany was bracing itself for a second wave of pollution.

The Dutch authorities, having had sufficient warning of the 50-mile stream of pesticides and mercury approaching their borders, ordered the closure of three sluices to direct the chemicals straight into the North Sea. The aim is to prevent the poisonous substances from entering side canals or affecting drinking water.

Water to supply Amsterdam, The Hague and Leiden will be taken from reservoirs along the coast of Nord-Holland province for the next week.

But the West German regions of Baden-Wuerttemberg, Rhineland-Palatinate, Hesse, and Saarland, which are geographically closest to the sources of the toxic stream in Switzerland, have had less opportunity to prepare themselves for what ecologists have described as the Rhine's biggest pollution disaster.

They were alerted at the weekend that a further 10,000 litres of toxic waste water had entered the Rhine through a defective pipe at the Sandoz chemical plant in Basle.

A fire at Sandoz on November 1 resulted in more than 30 tonnes of poisonous chemicals entering the Rhine.

The resulting destruction of fish, birds, insects and river flora appears to be worst on the upper Rhine between Basle and the West German city of Karlsruhe. The authorities have ordered the closure of all wells along the Rhine.

Some 25,000 people in two towns near Bonn were being supplied with fresh water by the fire brigade.

The Bonn Government, which maintains that the Swiss authorities failed to give sufficient warning of the scale of the disaster, has been powerless to halt the poisonous wave.

The opposition Social Democrats, citing an internal report obtained from the West German Association of Chemical Industries, said that safety measures at Sandoz had been inadequate.

The Swiss President Alphons Egli, expressed regret to West Germany, France, and the Netherlands. He also pledged to provide full information. "The accident has prompted consternation, and fear, not only in Basle, but in the entire region," he said, adding that Switzerland "deeply regretted" the consequences.

Hamburg poll blow to SPD

By Anna Tomforde in Bonn

THE Social Democrats suffered a major defeat in their traditional stronghold of Hamburg at the weekend, where Chancellor Helmut Kohl's Christian Democrats overtook them to become the biggest party.

The 10 per cent loss for the SPD, which has ruled the city for the past 26 years, comes as a devastating blow for the Social Democrats just over two months before a general election.

The SPD, under Hamburg's mayor, Mr Klaus von Dohnanyi, earlier held an absolute majority of 51.3 per cent. The latest result, according to computer predictions, left the future government of the city state in the balance, with neither of the two big parties reaching an absolute majority.

The Hamburg poll is more than encouraging for Dr Kohl's SDU, which gained over 42 per cent of the vote, improving its 1982 result by almost 4 per cent. The anti-nuclear Greens, the GAL (Green Alternative List), also made strong gains, reaching over 10 per cent of the vote, while the liberal Free Democrats, despite an improved performance, remained just below the 5 per cent minimum vote required.

Analysts said the Hamburg result could be a death blow for the hopes harboured by the SPD's Chancellor candidate, Mr Johannes Reu, of gaining an absolute majority in the January 25 general election.

Many traditional SPD voters stayed at home in Hamburg but almost 50,000 changed over to the Christian Democrats. The Greens benefitted from the 90,000 first-time voters in the city.

The Hamburg SPD had come under severe criticism for its vague line on nuclear power and the mishandling by the police of recent anti-nuclear demonstrations in the city.

Mr von Dohnanyi, the 58-year-old mayor, will now have to look for a coalition partner if he is to stay in office. The GAL said that it would only be prepared to negotiate with the SPD if it agreed to an immediate stop to nuclear energy, which provides 75 per cent of Hamburg's electricity needs.

Mr von Dohnanyi declared himself and the SPD "the clear losers" but again rejected any form of cooperation with the GAL. But with the Liberals not available as coalition partners, there were clear cut signs that the two big parties, the SPD and the CDU, would enter into a "grand coalition" in the city. They would face a strong and noisy opposition in the form of the radical GAL.

Letters to the Editor are welcomed but not all can be acknowledged. We don't like cutting them but sometimes this is necessary to get them in the page — short letters stand a better chance. Send them to The Guardian Weekly, PO Box 19, Cheadle, Cheshire SK8 1DD England.

Atom secrets man held by Israel

By Ian Black in Jerusalem

AFTER weeks of speculation the Israeli Government admitted at the weekend that it was holding Mr Mordecai Vanunu, who disappeared in Britain after leaking secret information about Israel's nuclear weapons to a Sunday newspaper.

At the same time, the government denied that Mr Vanunu, who was last seen in London on September 30, had been kidnapped on British soil or that the former prime minister, Mr Shimon Peres, had contacted Mrs Thatcher to discuss the affair. It gave no explanation of how he had been brought to Israel.

Political sources in Jerusalem said that a factor in the timing of the announcement was the wish to prevent any further pressure on the British government, which has been embarrassed by continued demands in Parliament for statements on the affair.

Mr Vanunu is expected to face a secret trial in which neither the precise charge nor the final outcome will be made public on the grounds of national security.

Mr Vanunu, aged 32, rose to fame last month when the Sunday Times published his account of the clandestine production of atomic weapons at a centre in the southern Negev the Dimona nuclear research desert, where he had worked for about eight years, despite his known leftwing opinions and support for the Palestinian cause.

The newspaper concluded, on the basis of Mr Vanunu's verbal and photographic testimony and checking by independent experts, that Israel had between 100 to 200 atomic warheads and thus ranked as the world's sixth nuclear power.

Although it had long been assumed that Israel had a nuclear capability, the publication of inside information about its extent was seen in Jerusalem as a disastrous breach of basic security.

Speculation about Mr Vanunu's whereabouts had been rife. According to one account he was abducted in Britain by agents of the Mossad secret service and smuggled to Israel by diplomatic bag.

The government statement said only: "Mordechai Vanunu is under lawful detention in Israel, following a court order which was issued after a hearing at which the lawyer he chose was present. Due to subjudice regulations, no further details will be published.

"All the rumours to the effect that Vanunu was 'kidnapped' on British soil are totally without foundation and it follows that there is likewise no basis to the report that Mr Peres contacted Mrs Thatcher in order to inform her about something that never took place."

Government officials would give no further details about Mr Vanunu's whereabouts, but Israel Radio later quoted police and prison authorities as saying that the suspect was not being held in any normal gaol or detention centre. This strengthened speculation that he is in the custody of the Shin Bet secret service.

Experts said this week that under the rubric of national security it is legal for the whole judicial process, including evidence, verdict and sentence, to be kept secret. There are several precedents, the most recent being of an Israeli citizen sentenced to 12 years in prison after being caught trying to pass secrets to the Syrian embassy in Cyprus.

"If a court decides to keep proceedings secret," said Dr Mordechai Kremnitzer, a Hebrew University law professor, "then, theoretically, it is possible that we will never know what happened."

Two famous cases offer a guide to the likely future course of the Vanunu affair. In 1974, a man called Motti Kedar was freed after serving a 17-year sentence. Kedar, a former criminal, was sent on an intelligence mission abroad in the mid-1950s and committed a crime that has never been formally disclosed — although it is widely believed that he murdered a fellow Israeli agent and stole a large amount of money.

On his return to Israel, Kedar was arrested and tried in camera. A year passed before any information was released, and even then it only stated the sentence he had received.

Another man, Arri Elad, was released in 1967 after serving a 10-year sentence. He was convicted of attempting to pass secret information to Egyptian intelligence officers.

The Israeli public was not told anything until afterwards about his crime, trial or sentence.

New face and old tanks on Red Square

By Martin Walker in Moscow

THE only new Soviet weapon on display in Red Square for the parade marking the anniversary of the 1917 Revolution was the rising new star of the Red Army. General Pyotr Lushev took the parade and made the keynote speech, in the absence of Defence Minister Marshal Sergei Sokolov, aged 75, who is ill.

There was, however, no sign of the Soviet Union's devastating new propaganda weapon, Mrs Raisa Gorbachev, who has transformed the world's opinion of Kremlin womanhood. But the new woman recruit to the Soviet leadership, Central Committee Secretary Alexandra Biryukova, joined the Politburo on the podium above Lenin's tomb.

The now familiar military hardware of SS-21 battlefield missiles, Sams, armoured cars and T-72 tanks of the Taman Guards Division roared over the cobblestones. But there were no new arms on display. The fifteen-minute armoured parade was followed, as is now the custom, by a march past by civilians carrying paper flowers, red flags and huge posters that boasted of productivity gains or condemned the US Star Wars programme.

General Lushev, the new First Deputy Minister of Defence, was promoted to his ministerial rank over the heads of several marshals. A younger man who has clearly found favour with Mr Gorbachev, General Lushev gave a brief speech of absolute orthodoxy. He praised the Politburo for "enlarging the defence potential of our nation, strengthening our military might and heightening vigilance.

"Our policy of peace is in the interests of people everywhere. The evidence for this is seen in the support for the proposals which the Soviet side put forward at the Reykjavik summit, and for the unilateral Soviet moratorium on nuclear testing," General Lushev went on, as if to emphasise that he for one had no military doubts about Mr Gorbachev's foreign policy.

General Lushev had opened the parade at 10am sharp, standing immobile in the back of a vast grey Zil convertible, and gripping a special stanchion to keep his balance as the limousine rocked over the uneven cobbles of Red Square.

His limousine, and another carrying the Moscow military commander, choreographed their way along the lines of troops, stopping four times in the square itself to give Revolution Day greetings to the 8,000 assembled troops of all the services. Each time, the Zils were met by what sounded uncannily like tape-recorded "hurrahs" from the troops.

Scurries of snow drifted over the troops as they goose-stepped past the Kremlin at the regulation pace of 118 steps to the minute, each step the regulation 75 centimetres long.

At a Kremlin reception after the parade, Mr Gorbachev said that there was "no road back" from the new international situation which had developed as a result of his Reykjavik meeting with President Ronald Reagan. He said the way forward now lay through a "new political mentality" in which nations showed respect for the choices made by each other.

The second most powerful man in the Soviet Union, Mr Yegor Ligachev, who is sometimes seen as a potential hardline challenger to Mr Mikhail Gorbahev, last week put himself squarely behind the Gorbachev strategy at home and abroad.

In the traditional Kremlin speech for the eve of the anniversary, he stressed that the Gorbachev policy at the Reykjavik summit had been "a correct and timely step." And on the domestic front, he echoed exactly Mr Gorbachev's definition of "the revolutionary character of our social and economic reconstruction."

As the party's ideology chief, the high priest of the Leninist creed, he told the audience of 6,000 party officials in the Kremlin that "the ideological struggle should not stand as an obstacle to improving relations with countries that have different systems."

He repeated the now-familiar Gorbachev appeals for industrial managers to take more responsibility, for workers to organise themselves and for wages to correspond more closely to individual output. He also echoed the Gorbachev critique of bureaucracy, and stressed the need to strengthen legal education so that people could use their rights more effectively.

US analysts, more through wishful thinking than any real evidence, have increasingly identified Mr Ligachev as the leader of a more traditionalist wing within the party, and thus a potential rival to Mr Gorbachev. The evidence seems based partly on his age, 10 years older than Mr Gorbachev, and partly on Mr Ligachev's formal reprimand of the Pravda editors who printed remarkably critical letters about party privileges and party bureaucrats last January.

Mr Ligachev, who has been the driving force in the campaign against alcoholism, has also won a reputation for puritanism. This is probably deserved. In last week's speech, he endorsed the anti-alcohol campaign, arguing that the cost to the state in lost taxes was already being made up by higher industrial productivity, less absenteeism and fewer accidents.

He pointed to a possible new Kremlin disarmament initiative, speaking warmly of suggestions advanced by German (and indeed British) Social Democrats for a nuclear-free corridor along the frontier dividing the two Germanies.

THE US seemed set to breach the Salt II arms agreement this week with the introduction of a B-52 bomber adapted to carry cruise missiles.

The Pentagon refused to confirm this latest development, reported in the Washington Post, sticking to the line that the US was going to bring on stream the 131st air-launched cruise missile this year without announcing a date. Coming after the failure to make progress in last week's round of arms talks in Vienna, the breach of Salt II is certain to sour the rapidly deteriorating atmosphere between Washington and Moscow. Leading Democrats indicated that Congress, now under their control, was not going to take the move lying down. The B-52 bomber will become operational at Carswell air force base, at Fort Worth, Texas. The move would put the US in violation of a provision of the unratified Salt II agreement limiting each side to no more than 1,320 missile warheads and bombers with cruise missile carrying capability. The decision to abandon Salt II was taken in May by President Reagan, who said that the US would stop respecting the agreement and base strategic weapons decisions on "the nature and magnitude of the threat posed by Soviet strategic forces."

The US defence community is divided on the practical Soviet reaction to the Administration's Salt II decision, with some fearing a major Soviet buildup. Some administration officials argue, on the other hand, that Moscow has not made a major issue of Salt II.

The spirit of Reykjavik is dead

By Hella Pick in Vienna

THE spirit of Reykjavik finally evaporated last week when the Soviet Foreign Minister, Mr Eduard Shevardnadze, and the US Secretary of State, Mr George Shultz, left Vienna without achieving an inch of progress on disarmament, or even setting a date for another meeting.

Mr Shevardnadze said afterwards that their five hours of discussion had left a "bitter taste," and that they had reached no agreement on a future summit. Mr Shultz told his news conference that the subject of a summit never came up. He added: "I can't say that the meetings have moved us along in any significant way."

While Mr Shevardnadze complained that the US side appeared to wish to forget the Reykjavik summit "as soon as possible," the Americans blamed the Russians for refusing to discuss anything other than the Strategic Defence Initiative and predicted a bitter propaganda offensive to follow from the Soviet Union.

The US research project for defensive space weapons re-emerged as the decisive obstacle to arms control negotiations in other areas. With neither side willing to give ground, the US would prefer to settle back to the slow and patient haul at the Geneva arms talks, and the Russians, without abandoning Geneva, seem ready to concentrate on Western public opinion and the US Congress to force President Reagan to restrict Star Wars.

The Americans had come to Vienna with Mr Paul Nitze, the senior US adviser on arms control, as well as key negotiators from the Geneva talks. They brought detailed memoranda setting out areas of agreement on arms control achieved at Reykjavik and the *issues where the two sides continued to differ.*

The Russians simply set out the areas where they considered agreement had been reached in Reykjavik. That assessment differs substantially from the American version; especially on strategic weapons, where the Soviet Union asserts that Mr Reagan committed himself to the complete elimination of nuclear weapons, while the Americans say they are concerned only with the elimination of ballistic missiles. There were other vital differences and omissions in the Soviet presentation of the Reykjavik understanding.

However, no such issues were even discussed in Vienna. Mr Shultz disclosed that the Soviet Foreign Minister and his officials refused to consider anything other than the Strategic Defence Initiative. "Our problem here was the *inability to get them to talk about* anything but SDI," he said.

Even on SDI, senior American officials said, the Russians were far from illuminating. Before Vienna, the Kremlin had hinted that it might be willing to discuss a generous interpretation of "laboratory research" on space weapons. But this was not raised in Vienna.

The US Secretary of State did not appear to be as downcast as he was at the end of the Reykjavik summit. He was able to report some marginal progress in human rights, which the Russians have now agreed to put on the agenda of periodic meetings between America and Soviet officials in a "Bilateral review group."

The Soviet Union has agreed to start a new round of expert meetings on regional issues; and some progress was achieved on bilateral questions.

Even in arms control Mr Shultz tried to take an upbeat note: "I continue to believe that as this process and the rhythm and the pace of it moves along we may wind up four or five years from now looking back at Reykjavik as a watershed meeting," he said.

Mr Shevardnadze was less sanguine. "One cannot avoid the impression that our partners wish to forget Reykjavik as soon as possible," he said. The Russians were bound to interpret the US *position*, "both in Vienna and here in Geneva, as a mixed bag of mothballed views and approaches." He also criticised the US's Nato allies whose political leaders "have thus far failed to adjust themselves to the new atmosphere in Europe's political life created in Reykjavik."

Mr Shevardnadze accused Britain and France of seeking "to protect their alleged privileges as nuclear states," and said that Western Europe seemed to be backing off from the "historic chance" to move towards a world free of nuclear weapons.

"Are our missiles in Europe a threat, while theirs are just an assortment of chocolates in a fancy box?" he said at the Helsinki Declaration Review Conference in Vienna.

The British Foreign Secretary, Sir Geoffrey Howe, later rejected Mr Shevardnadze's criticism. "If his remarks are intended to include the British Government, they are a travesty of the truth."

The Geneva talks are due to adjourn this week and will be resumed at the earliest in the middle of January. The Americans urged Mr Shevardnadze to allow expert meetings to take place during the winter break, outside the Geneva framework. There is no assurance that the Kremlin will try even that limited proposal.

Superpower arms 'in balance'

By David Fairhall

THE two superpowers go into their latest arms-control talks with their strategic nuclear arsenals roughly in balance, the International Institute of Strategic Studies has calculated, and with the Russians as well as the Americans investigating space and land-based defence against ballistic missiles.

After working its figures in accordance with the counting rules established by earlier arms-control agreements (Salt I and II), the Institute reckons that the Soviet Union now has about 600 more launchers than the US — that is, long-range ballistic missiles and bombers — but 2,000 fewer individual warheads.

"Overall," the London-based Institute concludes in the latest edition of its Military Balance, "we judge that US and Soviet strategic forces are in rough balance, and that the data do not support the contention that the US forces are, taken as a whole, inferior to those of the USSR.

During the past year, the Military Balance points out, both superpowers have begun to deploy a new generation of strategic systems. On the American side, the first MX missiles have been placed in modified Minutemen silos, and the first squadron of B-1 bombers has been declared operational.

Conversions of older B-52 bombers to carry nuclear cruise missiles has continued (bringing the US up against the SALT II ceiling for this type of weapon) and further Ohio class submarines have been deployed to carry Trident I missiles.

This leaves the more powerful Trident II missile (which Britain has ordered) and the advanced cruise missile under development, the small Midgetman ballistic missile still subject to political controversy and a "Stealth" bomber, of which little is known, promised for the 1990s.

The Soviet modernisation programme over the past year includes deployment of the road-mobile SS-25, which is replacing the silo-based SS-11. The replacement of Yankee by Delta class submarines also means a switch from SS-N-6 missiles to SS-N-23s, which each carry 10 warheads instead of two. The Blackjack bomber (which will be able to carry cruise missiles) is under development.

Both these modernisation programmes involve significant improvements in accuracy and reliability — and hence in overall capability — but only a small increase in warhead numbers.

The Institute's new figures illustrate one of the issues the Americans will be raising in the newly extended Geneva talks — a Soviet preponderance in land-based, and therefore potentially more accurate, missiles.

The Military Balance, 1986-87, IISS, London.

SOVIET-AMERICAN STRATEGIC NUCLEAR BALANCE

	UNITED STATES		SOVIET UNION	
	Launchers	Warheads	Launchers	Warheads
Land missiles	1,010	2,110	1,398	6,420
Submarine missiles	640	6,656	944	3,216
Bombers	260	4,080	160	1,080
	1,910	12,846	2,502	10,716

Now the Democrats can call the tune

By Alex Brummer in Washington

THE applause lines of Ronald Reagan's "Last Hurrah" campaign to save the Senate for Republicans, came back to haunt him as broadcasters replayed the videos and tapes over and over again showing the President begging not to be condemned to a six-year presidency.

Even as the final returns from across the country were coming in, showing a strong Democratic renaissance in the South and West — the prosperous sunbelt states which have been the shining star of the Republican realignment — the White House "spin doctors" were at work seeking as it were to snatch victory from the jaws of defeat.

As the world discovered in the aftermath of the Reykjavik debacle, when the President's handlers put him on the public relations offensive, he can change perceptions as if by magic. The accords which never were in Geneva became "agreements" and suddenly the American people, who had always harboured doubts about the feasibility of "Star Wars" became *overwhelming supporters, according to the polls.*

It was in a similar style that the "spin doctors," those aides responsible for showing the President in the best light by telling opinion makers what really happened, began their work. Never mind that the canny old retiring Speaker of the House, Tip O'Neill, who has waited six years to see the President's magic dissipated, labelled it "the end of the Reagan revolution." The important thing was to show that it will go on. After the ferocious and vitriolic personal attacks he adopted on the campaign trail, Mr Reagan stood statesmanlike the morning after and called for bipartisanship on foreign policy and defence, the Strategic Defence Initiative and the Contras, welfare and tax reform.

For the first time in six years, however, the Democrats do not have to roll over and play dumb. Sweeping gains in the Senate — beyond even the party's best hopes — mean an iron grip on the vital committees which can make foreign policy, raise taxes and effectively select the judiciary: this will mean no more Supreme Court judges in the authoritarian William Rhenquist mould. Democrats in the Senate can be assured of backing in the House of Representatives where Democrats have also bounced back an even stronger force.

One of the saddest sights over the last six years has been watching the Democrats swallow large doses of Reaganism on the grounds that it would not do in the constituencies to set themselves up as opposition to a popular President. Indeed, Mr Reagan sought to run his mid-term effort for Republican candidates as the same outsider he was in 1980 and 1984 saying at each rally that it was good to be away from Washington and back among the "real people."

In foreign policy, defence and social policy the Democrats are now finally in a position to put their stamp back on the government and begin to roll back the Reagan agenda. Economic policy, however, is likely to be a lot more tricky. Mr Reagan has handed over to the Democrats a ship which is decidedly leaky: the budget deficit is as high as ever; large parts of the country are in recession of one kind or another.

The difficult part for the Democratic leadership will be to prove that it can deliver on the improvement in living standards promised on the stump. Failure to do so could cripple the Presidential prospects of Senator Gary Hart, Governor Mario Cuomo of New York and others as they dive into the Presidential scrimmage in the next days and weeks.

With the first $100 million of military aid already on its way to the Contras fighting in Nicaragua, there is little that the Democrats can do to stop this year's planned autumn offensive. However, support nationwide for Contra funding is wafer thin. On the campaign trail this autumn one has heard Democrats spend the Contra aid in dozens of different ways from help to farmers to shelter for poor blacks in the inner-cities. Putting aside such rhetoric the Democrats genuinely have the means now to take a moral stand against Contra assistance.

With Yankee aristocrat Claiborne Pell (known to his colleagues as "stillborn") or Senator Joseph Biden, a Liberal Democrat with bright Presidential prospects, among the favourites to take over *the Senate Foreign Relations Committee*, it has the opportunity to conduct the full investigation of the "Hasenfus affair" and the indictment of American policy in Nicaragua put together by Senator John Kerry of Massachusetts. He has produced charges that the White House systematically circumvented the Nation's laws and Congressional will by conducting a clandestine military supply operation to the rebels.

Perhaps, however, the most significant change will come in the defence arena. With the departure of Senator Barry Goldwater from the chair of the Senate Armed Services Committee and his replacement by Senator Sam Nunn (also a potential Presidential contender *in 1988), the Reagan* Administration will find itself having to deal with a defence intellectual who is already more highly regarded among the joint chiefs-of-staff, than the Defence Secretary Mr Weinberger.

Star Wars, on which defeated Republican Senate candidates like Republican Ken Kramer in Colorado had staked their hopes, was not a vote winner. Senator Nunn, who demolished the substance of Mr Reagan's strategic stand in Geneva — by pointing out the President's confusions between ballistic systems and all-offensive nuclear systems — has only a lukewarm interest in Star Wars. By funding alone it will almost certainly be condemned to the laboratory, *where Mr Gorbachev wants to* keep it.

It was not defence, however, but the economy which settled the 1986 election in the way it came out. Although it was highly fashionable during the campaign to say there was no overriding national issues, the exit pollings show otherwise. Voters generally felt that they were less well off in 1986 than in 1980 when President Reagan was elected despite the high-tech and service economy which has brought prosperity to states such as Massachusetts and California.

The middle of the country has been suffering from a terrible deflation. From the oil states of Oklahoma and Texas to the wheat-growing heartland of the Dakotas and the mining mountain states, the fall in commodity prices from oil to wheat, from timber to sugar beet has wrought havoc and economic dislocation. Similarly America's older industries from textiles in the south to steel in the rustbelt have also suffered. Dealing with these issues, which clearly aided the Democrat victory, poses a series of difficult problems.

With farm subsidies already running at record $26 billion it is not very clear that Democrats can push the White House harder on this issue, although they may well seek to erode his free trade stand, and protect American producers, by putting up barriers of one kind or another. However, they cannot be seen to be responsible for flooding the lake of budget red ink. Instead, they may well fall into the trap of fulfilling President Reagan's stump description of them as the "tax and tax, spend and spend" Democrats. While it may be fiscally responsible to raise taxes it could be highly dangerous for 1988.

Certainly, tax reform — the great domestic triumph of Mr Reagan's second term — could look very different by the time the 100th Congress is through with it. In the same way as the new system is simpler than its predecessor it will also be more easy to adjust. Rates could be raised and loopholes opened by Democrats seeking to avoid blame for rising budget deficits at a time when they will be under constituency pressure to do more to compensate for falling commodity prices.

Indeed, Mr Reagan's last political battle in Washington could be *his fight to keep down taxes. More* than anything else, with the possible exception of Star Wars, the president has been proud of his supply side revolution which has kept the current recovery running for nearly four years — the longest in the post-war history. It is the legacy he will be seeking to protect even if it means wielding his veto with greater frequency.

Mr Reagan put his personal prestige on the line not for inferior State candidates, such as those in Nevada and South Dakota, but for his legacy and he is not going to let go easily. As he uses his veto he can take comfort from the fact that while his popularity is not transferable it remains a phenomenon which transcends normal political discourse.

HOW THEY FINISHED

Senate:

Democrats 55 (47), Republicans 45 (53). 34 seats contested.

House of Representatives:

Democrats 260 (253), Republicans 175 (182). All 435 contested.

Governorships:

Democrats 26 (34), Republicans 24 (16).

(Previous totals of seats held in brackets)

Democrats still in disarray

THROUGHOUT the entire American mid-term election struggle — a contest fought primarily on television, between competing advertising agencies — the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee produced only one generic commercial. A devastated, decrepit, empty farmhouse. "It wasn't just a farm. It was a family. Vote Democrat." That advertisement was screened across much of the Mid-West. The rest — the hundreds of other commercials, the myriad of messages — was state by state, and personality by personality. Hatchet by hatchet, you could almost say. There wasn't a theme. There was hand to hand fighting on whatever bit of ground fell free from California to Florida.

These are basic facts to keep in mind as that same Democratic Campaign Committee hails the end of the Reagan era and the certainty of Presidential triumph in 1988. It ain't necessarily so. Mr Reagan — with admirable elan — sought, at the close, to save the Senate for the Republicans by attempting to graft national issues onto a host of gritty local campaigns. He didn't succeed (though he remains the favourite President of a full 60 per cent of the American public). But the fact of his failure, in turn, is no great testimony to the Democrats' resurgence as a cohesive force. There wasn't a Democratic theme that soared to victory. There was, instead, little more than the familiar mid-term vulnerability of a governing party suffering the inevitable ills of that mid-term. And, interestingly enough, in State politics, where the Democrats held the Governors' mansions, it was the Republicans who made the gains.

Of course some pattern may emerge on Capitol Hill when the new recipients of variegated electoral favour have to take stands on national issues, and there will be significant shifts — most notably in the way that Democratic Committee Chairmen get in the White House's hair. But it is too sweeping to see not merely a thundering defeat for the President, but also solid blocs of Senate and House Democrats continually uniting to vote him down. Quite a few of last week's victors from the South will be with Mr Reagan on specific issues anyway. And some of the areas where the President may encounter the biggest difficulties — like free trade versus protectionism — aren't necessarily going to be good news for the rest of the world. More generally, it simply isn't the case that the Democratic Party will be able to use its fresh strength to stop the President's fondest dreams dead in their tracks. With 1988 looming, will they vote for higher taxes? Even Star Wars is no sitting duck.

So one is probably down to people. Who won and who lost? Governor Cuomo won well. His White House prospects look as bright as most. Senator Joe Biden inherits an attention-grabbing committee chairmanship. He is worth watching. Mr Gary Hart at least managed to hand his Colorado seat onto another Democrat. That helps him. On the Republican side, Robert Dole may actually be helped by losing the chores of Senate majority leadership; and Congressman Kemp has another victory to celebrate. Vice President Bush, however, has seen again that the aura of Reagan is non-transferable. He looks a little lonelier.

But essentially, now, everyone is waiting. The last elections before the primary circuits are out of the way. The real threat to Mr Reagan's hegemony will come on distant stumps, as interest and anticipation leaves the Oval Office for far-flung fundraisers and chicken dinners. And, pretty starkly, there is everything to play for. The Republican field is more open than it was. The Democratic field is absolutely open, waiting to see whether traditional East Coast liberalism (Cuomo) can make headway in the crucial West; whether yuppie liberalism (Biden) from the no-man's-land of Delaware will catch hold; or whether Mr Hart, from the plains and mountains, can do better than he did in 1984. But do not underestimate the difficulties for the Democrats. Most activists, in their hearts, want Cuomo. But at mid-term there is absolutely no sign in the scatter of portents coast to coast that Cuomo's message, the old Democratic message, wins national minds or national votes. America — a kind of negative theme — may be less happy and sunny than it was. But it still loves Ronald Reagan. There is no hint yet of it coming to love someone else.

Reports, pages 9, 17

Art for VAT's sake

BRITAIN used to be the world leader in basic industries like shipbuilding, textile machinery, marine engines and deep sea fishing. Now they have all but slipped off the industrial map. One activity in which we still have an undisputed lead is the art sales market. But that pre-eminence could vanish overnight at the stroke of a bureaucrat's pen in Brussels. The EEC (so the trade fears) is preparing to implement the seventh directive on value added tax which would impose a 15 per cent tax on sales of works of art as part of a move to harmonise VAT throughout the community. This, it is claimed, would have a drastic effect on dealers, museums and private collectors in Britain, who would have to pay 15 per cent extra to keep valuable works of art here. It would place them at a disadvantage at auction sales compared with foreign vendors who would take their custom to New York where there is only a — widely avoided — 8¼ per cent local sales tax (not payable anyway, if you have a residence in certain states like Wyoming, which have no comparable levy). Although pictures sent to Britain for auction (like an estimated £5.8 million for a Rembrandt and two Frans Hals portraits due here from the US next month) would have the VAT refunded if re-exported, this still involves the vendor lending the Government 15 per cent of their value on landing for several months.

The art market in Britain is reckoned to be worth around £800 million a year. That, of course, includes not just the value of the pictures and antiques sold — by anyone from Christie's to the village antique shop — but also spending on hotels, airlines, shopping sprees and so forth by overseas dealers and customers.

There is another side to it, though. Why should Britain expect to be the only country in the EEC (with the possible exception of France) which refuses to charge VAT on art sales? Look in the mirror. Suppose Germany instead had declared UDI by being the only country to refuse to levy VAT on certain goods: would we not be the first to complain?

The real world, of course, is different, a whirlpool of competing subsidies in which those survive who cling on longest to what they can. The sine qua non of the City's attempt to capture a larger share of the world market for financial services is that the Government reduced stamp duty from 2 per cent to only ½ per cent. Without that concession the business would go to New York or Tokyo. That involves a diminution of tax revenues from share transactions which will be offset (hopefully) by taxes generated by the increased wealth generated in London by the Big Bang.

It was, if you like, part of an industrial strategy of a kind the Government declines to apply to manufacturing. That is just what is needed for the art world. A cool appraisal of the income which would accrue from applying VAT against the taxable wealth which would disappear overseas. You don't have to believe all the scare stories circulating in the trade to conclude that this is not an industry to be lightly consigned to oblivion for lack of a fight in Brussels.

Report, page 20

Abducted to Israel

Continued from page 1

Vanunu was first induced to leave the country voluntarily and then picked up abroad, the answer to at least one of those questions must be yes. Whichever question it is, it raises some pointed supplementaries. For if there was British connivance, what is the ethical distinction between Dr Dikko's case, in which he was wanted on corruption charges, and Mr Vanunu's, where he was wanted for betraying State secrets? If there was no British connivance, and Mr Vanunu left with a diplomatic seal on his crate, is this not the type of abuse against which the Government has been vocal in its condemnation (rightly) of other diplomatic missions?

It was a highly uncharacteristic lapse by Shin Beth, the Mossad's domestic intelligence counterpart, which allowed Mr Vanunu, with his known Arab sympathies, to roam at will through the Dimona plant so that he was able to sketch it and even produce photographs. Members of the Israeli security services would want to pick up some of the pieces after he had spilled them to a foreign newspaper. But an intelligence coup is useless if it aggravates relations between supposedly friendly states, which is what the Vanunu affair shows every sign of doing. The matter cannot rest where it is unless the Israeli authorities can show that neither their embassy nor their secret service in Britain was involved in Mr Vanunu's transportation to an unidentified prison to face a secret trial. And, as enforced white spaces proliferate across Israeli newspapers, and the furore grows, that is going to take some doing.

Report, page 7

Mr Tebbit's motives

MR NORMAN TEBBIT first condemned the BBC for being too quick to reject the Conservative Party's criticisms of their Libyan bombing coverage. Last week the corporation's reply had been on his desk for only a few hours before it was dismissed out of hand. Mr Tebbit's double standards expose his true purpose. He is not primarily interested in constructive criticism of the BBC's news output. The tortuous details of the precise meaning of Nine O'Clock News headlines no longer matters to him. If they did, or if this was really an attempt to help the BBC to reassert the principles of its charter, then Tory critics would be right. The public slanging would indeed be counterproductive. The tenacious aggression towards the corporation would be pointlessly over the top. Central Office would have said "No comment. We must read what the BBC has said and we will reply in our own time." But that isn't Mr Tebbit's purpose. He isn't primarily interested in a better BBC. He holds no candle to Reithian standards of public service broadcasting.

Mr Tebbit is softening up the BBC. He is trying to discredit it for short and long term reasons alike. In the short term, he hopes to frighten the corporation into providing less critical coverage of the Conservative Party in the run-up to a difficult election. And, by adopting a continuing hard line, he may well succeed in shifting the centre of gravity in the coverage more his way. But in the long run, is it not obvious that his purpose is much more radical? This government has long been a prey to the "private sector — good; public sector — bad" ideology. It has powerful, rightwing multinational media allies who are bursting to compete with the BBC and who will soon have the easily available technology to do it. It has a disreputable tradition of making gratuitous attacks upon the BBC ("As a nation, we're far too fond of running ourselves down. Maybe it's got something to do with the BBC. The Bashing Britain Corporation" — Mr Nigel Lawson, Blackpool 1985). It has tried, through the Peacock inquiry, to use the great and the good to remove the legitimacy of a public funded BBC and failed. Now it has established a Cabinet committee to examine the BBC again. The object of that committee is to find ways of commercialising the BBC during the third Thatcher term. In that context, the Tebbit attacks seem more than just a party gripe for more favourable treatment. They look more like a deliberate attempt to bludgeon the corporation's credibility and to weaken public confidence in it, to clear the way for the changes Mr Tebbit wants. Ironically, the most legitimate criticism of the corporation's news output at present is that it has already begun the descent in standards as part of the ratings war. It is marked by the increasingly extravagant preoccupation with the royal family. The public may welcome that move. But, at the same time, they continue to value the BBC's traditional claims of objectivity and balance, too. Mr Tebbit and Mrs Thatcher, leaders of one of the most intellectually self-confident governments of the century, have no time for that. But if they don't lay off, it could turn into just the sort of political miscalculation that the Government is so determined to avoid as the election nears. The Conservative Party underestimates the British people's conservatism at its peril.

Report, page 5

The House of Commons is no place for bounders

THERE are still questions to be resolved about the incident in the Commons two weeks ago when Mr Tam Dalyell, Labour MP for Linlithgow, was thrown out of the chamber for calling the Prime Minister "a bounder." Despite some immediate assumptions, it cannot necessarily be taken for granted that the term "bounder" has now been added to the Speaker's catalogue of unparliamentary language. Mr Dalyell had also described Mrs Thatcher as a liar, a cheat, a crook, and "a sustained, brazen deceiver." Given the cumulative effect of his language, the Deputy Speaker, Mr Harold Walker, would have felt no need to evaluate individual epithets.

It is certainly possible that had he simply stuck to "bounder" Mr Dalyell might have been able to stay for the rest of the debate. The word has several meanings, not all of them abrasive. "One who sets or marks out bounds" appears to be the oldest: the Prime Minister would surely not quarrel with that. "One who occupies a tin ore ground" is another. That would not necessarily be regarded as actionable in the courts. Equally, Mr Dalyell might have intended to compare the Prime Minister to a four-wheeled cab or growler — a further definition of bounder. It seems rather more likely, though, that Mr Dalyell, an old Etonian, was using the term in the sense prevalent in public schools, like his own and its rival establishment Greyfriars, where it has long been familiar in such usages as "Oh, I say, leggo, you bounders, you rotters, you cads, yarooh."

The case for this interpretation has been strengthened by a letter from Mr Dalyell published in the London Standard in which he described Mrs Thatcher as a cad. Cad, again, is a world susceptible to several interpretations. The Oxford Dictionary defines it as "an unbooked passenger, one whose fare the driver of a coach has appropriated," though curiously it can also mean an omnibus conductor. This suggests that some extremely ingenious frauds must have taken place on public transport in the days before deregulation. Neither of these descriptions, however, would seem at first sight relevant to the charges which Mr Dalyell was making against the Prime Minister at the time which had to do not with the newly implemented Transport Bill but with Westland.

More pertinently, "cad" is also defined specifically as "townsman" in the disparaging sense used by pupils at Eton, and so, by extension, as "an ill-based vulgar fellow, or a person lacking in the finer instincts and feelings." The clerks of the House of Commons, who are prudent and far-sighted, will no doubt have already begun to research the meanings not only of the terms Mr Dalyell has already used, but of others, like "rotter" and "yarooh" which a reasonable person might also expect to form part of his vocabulary. Rotter should cause no trouble. Though it means an objectionable person, its use is described as only "vaguely deprecatory," so it would probably not deserve enough penalty points to warrant a sending off. Yarooh is more problematical. There is little evidence that this world exists at all outside the playing fields of Greyfriars and it is probably most reliably defined as "hooray" spelled backwards. It's a fairly safe bet, however, that it has nothing to do with tin ore.

Le Monde ENGLISH SECTION

The Washington Times has touched off a controversy by publishing an interview with French Prime Minister Jacques Chirac in which he is reported to have said he had been told the attempt to blow up an El Al plane in London last April was the work of the Israeli secret service, Mossad, and Syrian dissidents. In the front-page interview, Chirac is quoted as telling the Washington Times' editor-in-chief, Arnaud de Borchgrave, that he, Chirac, had been informed by West Germany's Chancellor Helmut Kohl and Defence Minister Hans Dietrich Genscher that Syria was not involved in the unsuccessful attempt to destroy the airliner.

Chirac said to cite Mossad role in El Al bomb attempt

By Bernard Guetta

WASHINGTON — In a long article published by the Washington Times on Friday, November 7, Prime Minister Chirac is reported to have said that Chancellor Kohl and Defence Minister Genscher arrived at the conclusion that the attempt (to blow up the El Al plane), which led to Margaret Thatcher's government severing diplomatic relations with Syria on October 25, was in fact "a provocative act engineered by the Israeli secret service, Mossad, with the complicity of renegades in Syrian President Hafez el-Assad's entourage."

The report, datelined Paris and filed by Arnaud de Borchgrave, the editor-in-chief of this daily which is close to the White House and is owned by the Moon sect, at no time quotes Chirac directly, because it say this was what he wanted. De Borchgrave explains the 90-minute interview took place on Tuesday last week, and that Chirac agreed to the interview being taped and the publication of his views.

Chirac's comments, as "summed up" by De Borchgrave, are basically very ambiguous since the Prime Minister seems to be referring solely to his two West German interlocutors without ever venturing to give his own views on their conclusions or indicating on what they were based. Chirac, for example, went so far as to admit he did not know the real facts of the London incident, for he told De Borchgrave he had not seen the complete dossier on the case. Nevertheless, he apparently did not make the slightest effort to dissociate himself from the opinions credited to Kohl and Genscher.

So if Chirac is to be believed, Kohl and Genscher presumably believed that the Mossad and dissident elements in Assad's entourage were trying to embarrass the Syrian President and topple his government. If the bomb that Nezar Hindawi had placed in the hand luggage of the young Irish girl whom he had promised to marry had gone off when the plane was airborne, 376 people would have been killed. Paraphrasing Chirac, De Borchgrave writes this would have brought some sort of reprisal against Syria which would have caused Assad's regime to collapse.

There is no explanation as to why the Prime Minister of France, which has a presence, interests and friendships in the Middle East far exceeding anything West Germany has there, should today feel it necessary to go to Bonn for information and analyses. On the other hand, De Borchgrave does say that during the interview Chirac dismissed the evidence produced by the British secret service with a shrug and pooh-poohed as worthless all Western intelligence services which he believed were infiltrated by moles from organisations ranging from the CIA to the DGSE.

The nationality of these moles is not indicated, but the West German leaders are said to believe that the conspirators, whoever they are, instructed Hindawi to report to the Syrian embassy after having rigged up his girl-friend as a walking bomb in order to compromise the Syrian government.

It is on this point that Chirac reportedly expressed a personal opinion when he is said to have admitted he shared Bonn's scepticism, adding that he had spoken to people who knew the former Syrian ambassador to London and that they were all convinced he was not the sort of diplomat who would ever agree to take part in any terrorist plot, consequently the British accusation was not plausible.

(November 8)

It has been a painful weekend for Prime Minister Jacques Chirac who on Friday added a few adjustments to the blanket denial with which the Washington Times report was initially received. Chirac, however, categorically denied ever bringing up the question of the Mossad's possible involvement in the London bomb attempt during the interview he gave the Washington Times. He did, though, later admit that he thought he was speaking to the Washington Post and assumed the tape recorder had been turned off when he made comments that were meant to be off the record.

Meanwhile, in Washington, Arnaud de Borchgrave said he had the tape recording of the interview and threatened to publish the full transcript if the French government persisted in casting slurs on his good faith.

In Bonn, the West German government's spokesman Friedhelm Ost denied the government possessed any information concerning a possible Mossad provocation in the April 17 attempt to blow up an El Al passenger plane in London. "The government," he insisted, "never had any such information and therefore could not have passed it on to the French government." And a Foreign Ministry spokesman declared that on the whole "the reported conversations between Messrs Chirac and Genscher are a total figment of the imagination which the ministry firmly denies."

PM in very hot water

By Jacques Amalric

THERE WAS a good deal of embarrassment at the Prime Minister's office on Friday following the Washington Times's publication of statements credited to Prime Minister Jacques Chirac — statements all tending to trivialise the charge of terrorism made against Syria following the unsuccessful attempt on April 17 to blow up an El Al Boeing in London. The article, based on an interview which the newspaper's editor-in-chief Arnaud de Borchgrave had with the Prime Minister, largely concerns a conversation that Chirac is said to have had with West German Chancellor Kohl and Foreign Minister Genscher.

The two men are reported to have told him at the meeting that the London incident was not a terrorist action by the Syrian government, but an operation devised by the Israeli secret service (Mossad) and President Assad's political opponents.

It is this final point of course that embarrasses Chirac most. Which is why the Prime Minister did not want to leave the matter at the denial he issued earlier — a denial as categoric as it was ambiguous — which stated that "the interpretation M de Borchgrave gave (the Prime Minister's) words was totally unfounded". Taking the opportunity offered by a press briefing devoted to the Franco-African summit due to be held in Lomé from November 13 to November 15, Chirac returned to the subject on Friday evening. He said De Borchgrave's article went "very far beyond what I said."

Referring to a somewhat similar incident in August following a meeting with an Israeli journalist (Ben Porat), Chirac appeared to admit he had a few communications problems on foreign policy issues. (On August 8, at the request of the Israeli ambassador in Paris, Prime Minister Chirac met this journalist, who later published an account of this conversation in the Yediot Aharonot. He quoted Chirac as minimising his own role in the Franco-Iraqi nuclear contract. Chirac was also said to have voiced reservations on setting up a Palestinian state. The Prime Minister's office then issued a statement saying Chirac had given no such interview to Porat, but that the Israeli journalist had spoken to Chirac because he was looking for material to fill out a book on French-Iraqi nuclear relations that he was writing.

Speaking at the press briefing, Chirac admitted: "These things happen. I've already been a victim of this sort of thing. I'm trying not to be one again and to be choosier in picking the people to whom I give interviews." He later con-

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Bani Sadr details US involvement in Iran arms supplies

By Jean Gueyras

FORMER IRANIAN President Abolhassan Bani Sadr, who, though living in exile in France, keeps in close touch with his country, has told Le Monde that the groundwork for former White House National Security Adviser Robert C. McFarlane's secret mission to Tehran in September was laid by another American mission to Iran which was received by Mohamed Ali Hadi Najafabadi, chairman of the Majlis Foreign Affairs Committee and a former friend of Ayatollah Hussein Ali Montazeri who switched his allegiance to Majlis Speaker Hojatoleslam Hashemi Rafsanjani a year ago. During his stay in Tehran, says Bani Sadr, McFarlane had a number of meetings with Pasdarans (Revolutionary Guards) commanders, at which ways of remedying the army's shortage of weapons were discussed.

Bani Sadr says he knows that just three days after McFarlane left the country, two American cargo planes from a military base in the Philippines landed at Tehran airport. They brought spare parts and electronic instruments for the Iranian army's radar equipment and the helicopters and F-5, F-4 and F-14 aircraft that the United States had sold to Iran during the Shah's time. The US government, says Bani Sadr, has also given the Iranians sophisticated equipment for jamming the radio stations of political opponents which have been set up along Iran's borders with the help of private donations from Americans.

At any rate, McFarlane's presence in Tehran was signalled early in October by tracts distributed by Sayed Mehdi Hashemi and his brother, Hadi Hashemi, who were arrested towards the middle of the same month by agents of the Minister of Intelligence, Hojatoleslam Rayshahri. In their handbills, the Hashemi brothers, who headed the Pasadarans' Bureau Islamic Liberation Movements Abroad and Ayatollah Montazeri's office denounced "the dealings certain leaders are having with the United States and the contacts established with American emissaries."

Since then the Pasdarans' Bureau for Islamic Liberation Movements Abroad is without a leadership as their top officials have been arrested. The department is now directly under the authority of Rafsanjani, who is Imam Khomeini's representative in the Higher Defence Council.

"Revelations that Washington has been negotiating with Iran to obtain the release of American hostages held in Lebanon are continuing to embarrass the White House. President Reagan urged the press on November 6 to stop speculation so as not to jeopardise the release of the hostages ("May I suggest and appeal to all of you with regard to this, that the speculation, the commenting on a story that came out of the Middle East and that, to us, has no foundation, all of that is making more difficult to get the other hostages out"). He refused to make any comment on possible negotiations with Iran.

The silence of the American authorities would appear to confirm that Washington is trying to make at least a partial deal with Tehran in apparent contrast to the anti-terrorist stand it flaunts. The case also seems to have caused some dissension within the administration where certain State Department officials fear the White House's anxiety to obtain the hostages release might damage American interests in the region. (Since this was written, Secretary of State George Shultz is reported to have protested to Reagan that plans to ship arms secretly to Iran so as to obtain the release of the hostages were contrary to the US policy of not negotiating with terrorist states.)

Coming as they do on the heels of US appeals to isolate states that support terrorism, these revelations also place the American authorities in an awkward position with regard to their European allies. Iran, together with Libya and Syria, happens to be on the list of countries tied to terrorism which the State Department has drawn up. Hodding Carter, former State Department spokesman, said on Thursday the US government seemed to be repeating Jimmy Carter's mistake "in assuming that there are certain factions in Iran with whom we can negotiate."

The Washington Post, which had earlier attacked France violently and accused it of getting ready to sell weapons to Syria in return for the release of French hostages ("A new place — a dismal place — seems to have been reached in the West's struggle against terrorism. Governments have reacted questionably in the past, but perhaps never quite so shamefully as France in its attempt to end the bombings that took ten lives in Paris a few weeks ago . . ." *Guardian Weekly, November 9 issue)*, called on Reagan to clarify the situation. It noted that nothing France had done was as serious as the suggestion that the United States had contemplated modifying a fundamental principle of its Middle East policy to court "moderate" Iranians in order to obtain the release of American hostages.

Meanwhile in Damascus, Syrian Prime Minister Raouf El Kassem said in an interview he gave Radio France Internationale that his country was continuing "to do everything possible to free the hostages who are in Lebanon or elsewhere." He called for "cooperation not only with France" but "with all countries who seriously desire to work honestly with Syria." He said he was satisfied with his country's relations with France, because the latter, in his words, "wants to pursue an independent policy free of American-Israeli pressure. We are not asking France or the other countries to be against them (Israel and the US). We are asking them to follow an objective policy and we find such objectivity in France's present policies."

(November 8)

According to a report just published by INSERM (National Health and Medical Research Institute), almost 12,000 French men and women kill themselves every year (not counting unreported cases). The number of suicides has been going up steadily since 1975, particularly among young people and the over-65s. In the European suicide league, France records more suicides than West Germany or Britain, but fewer than Denmark, Austria or Switzerland.

It is well-known that a country's infant mortality rate is an accurate reflection of its state of health. Can suicides be regarded in the same way? Do they mean that there is something wrong with the way society is organised? It would seem, in fact, that although certain socio-economic factors such as unemployment, the death of a spouse, or alcoholism come into play, the main cause of suicide remains that most distressing of illnesses, depression.

French worried by rising level of suicides

By Franck Nouchi and Jean-Yves Nau

WHY DO people kill themselves? Is there a category of the population that can be described as high-risk? The INSERM report provides no answers to these questions, nor indeed do similar surveys carried out in other countries.

Researchers always come up against the same problem: what exactly is it which enables a person to commit the irreversible act of suicide? No one knows whether it has to do with personality traits, neuro-biological changes in the brain, or environment-influenced genetic characteristics.

The INSERM report shows that many more men over 70 take their own lives (124 per 100,000 deaths) than do those aged about 50 (45 per 100,000). The suicide rate varies geographically. North-west France (Brittany, Normandy, Picardy) has easily the highest rate (over 40 per 100,000), while fewer people kill themselves in the south of France and in the Rhône-Alpes, Franche-Comté and Lorraine regions. Perhaps the biggest surprise is that the lowest rate of all is to be found in the Paris area (where it ranges between 14 and 20 per 100,000).

Now for the methods of suicide used. Easily the most common is hanging (almost 40 per cent), followed by shooting (about 20 per cent), poisoning (14 per cent) and drowning (11 per cent). There seem to be no seasonal fluctuations, apart from a slight increase in the spring. Similarly, no connection can be established between the full moon and the suicide rate. The day of the week when people are most likely to kill themselves is Monday; the least likely Sunday.

Among males, widowers and divorcees are at the highest risk, whereas women seem less influenced by their marital status — it is almost as if they were less dependent on their spouses than men. According to INSERM, "the variable most closely correlated with suicide is the divorce rate, a rate which is itself correlated with the number of women in work."

Rising unemployment is not, apparently, a principal cause of rising suicides among men over 40, which account for half of all suicides, though it does seem to be the case with women.

Alcoholism and suicide are not as obviously correlated as might have been thought. In particular, there is no noticeable connection between cirrhosis of the liver and suicide. "But," says the report, "that does not mean that drinking has nothing to do with suicide." It may make it easier to carry out the act because it breaks down a number of mental defences.

There may also be a genetic factor. In the October issue of the review, Archives of General Psychiatry, an American-Danish study suggests that depression and heredity may have an important bearing on suicide.

The greater part of the INSERM report deals with attempted suicides. In some cases, people genuinely wanted to kill themselves and are foiled by chance or by intervention from friends or family. "Other cases, however," says the report, "which are more numerous, seem to be characterised not so much by an irrepressible refusal to live as by the need to 'live differently', even if that means risking death in order to get the message across."

The study examined almost 3,300 such cases. Each year, in the 15-44 age group, almost 0.2 per cent of men and over 0.3 per cent of women try to kill themselves. On average, one out or six suicide attempts by men is successful; for women, the rate is one out of 30.

In 90 per cent of attempts, drugs are used. Eighty per cent of the time these are obtained on prescription. By far the commonest are tranquillisers (50 per cent); then come sleeping pills (18.7 per cent), barbiturates (9.2 per cent) and anti-depressants (8.2 per cent).

The report makes a detailed analysis of attempted suicides in the light of 29 parameters connected with the social, family and personal situation of the individual concerned. "No risk factor can in itself explain suicide attempts. However, the existence of mental disorders greatly increases the probability, as well as reflecting, in most cases, many unfavourable factors in, for instance, emotional and interpersonal relations."

The most decisive role seems to be played by personal psychological factors (especially relations within the family).

The prevention of suicides and attempted suicides is not easy. It can take two forms: primary prevention, which concerns the population as a whole, and secondary prevention, which is aimed only at high-risk individuals. The INSERM report confirms that suicide attempts are very often repeated (in 30 to 40 of the cases — usually after a short lapse of time). So the most urgent thing is to prevent recidivists. How?

Specialists believe that "a therapeutic or supportive bond should be established with the person during the hours or days immediately after the suicide attempt, and that it should be maintained for as long as is necessary to rule out any risk of repeated attempts."

What in fact happens is very different: "There are still many people who feel that a suicide attempt should be forgotten as quickly as possible — as though that were more humanly possible," says the report reprovingly. But then who — a member of the person's immediate circle, the family doctor, the psychiatrist? — can succeed in the vital task of turning an act of desperation (in cases where it is not a symptom of mental illness) into the beginning of a new life?

Various associations in favour of "the right to a decent death" have sprung up over the last few years in most Western countries. They are in favour of making death easy, whether by euthanasia or suicide, and have called for the legislation of the "voluntary termination of old age".

This attitude to death is likely to become increasingly widespread in Western countries, where there are more and more old people, and where freedom is tending to become the supreme goal — and the right to do as one wishes with one's own body its supreme form.

It should be noted that the number of suicides among over-65s is rising rather sharply. It would be wrong to draw a hasty conclusion from this trend, but equally wrong, too, to ignore it.

(October 18)

Can we continue to turn a blind eye?

By Robert Solé

SUICIDE is a taboo subject, which is hardly surprising in a society where death itself is denied, fudged, deliberately forgotten. Those who commit suicide accept the whole charade by almost always tiptoeing out of their — and our — lives. They are not interested in setting an example or catching the mass media's attention. Their nearest and dearest will suffer in silence and act as if nothing had happened. Others, although not taken in for one moment, go through the usual motions with a mixture of pity, horror and guilt.

How attitudes have changed! Jean-Jacques Rousseau regarded suicide as "a theft from mankind", while Pierre-Joseph Proudhon described it as "fraudulent bankruptcy", Earlier, Louis XIV was pitiless in his attitude towards suicide, which he called "a swindle". In 1670 he brought in legislation which specified, down to the tiniest detail, the punishment to be inflicted posthumously on those who had committed suicide: their property was to be confiscated, and their bodies dragged through the streets by a wagon, then strung up by their feet, and finally left on a refuse dump.

This relentless fury against a mere corpse — an attitude paralleled in other countries and at other times in history — betrayed a terrible fear of suicide. Suicide was regarded as a triple crime (against God, against one's own person, and against society) and had to be exorcised accordingly.

The Christian Church's view is that life belongs to God. And Saint Augustine said: "When a man kills himself, he kills a man." Saint Thomas Aquinas argued that suicide was worse than murder, because of the injury it caused to natural law (the desire to live) and to the love that every man owes to himself.

The Church was hardly any more forgiving when it came to "religious" suicide — the suicide of believers who refused to be forced to renounce their faith, or of nuns who preferred "to turn their back on the Lord" rather than be raped.

Until recently, people who had committed suicide while in full possession of their mental faculties were not entitled to a Catholic burial. The new code of canon law published in 1983 leaves bishops free to make their own decision on the matter. The Church is less severe than it used to be, but in its view, apart from the exceptional cases such as tortured prisoners who kill themselves, suicide remains "just as unacceptable as murder."

Suicide has always existed in every civilisation, even if its frequency has varied depending on the social or religious context. The Stoics turned it into a fine art, and the highly aesthetic and codified ritual of hara-kiri has not entirely disappeared from Japan.

But society has always tried, in one way or another, to discourage what it once called "self-murder". Under the Ancien Régime, the unfortunates who "bungled" their own death were given heavy fines, flogged in public, and in some cases sent to the galleys.

In 1790, however, France became one of the first countries to lift the penalties on attempted suicide. The move was proposed, it appears, by poor Dr Joseph Guillotin, who had never got over the fact that the guillotine was called after him.

Nowadays the law turns a blind eye to attempted suicide, though it does punish anyone who openly encourages suicide or fails to render assistance to a person in danger. Recently, for example, a prosecution was brought against the authors of a highly controversial book, "Suicide, Mode d'Emploi" (*"Suicide, an Instruction Manual"*), which described the various ways of successfully kill-

	France	Austria	Denmark	West Germany	Holland	Norway	Sweden	Switzerland	UK
MEN	30.6	38,3	40,8	28,2	13,8	18,1	26,5	36.5	11,2
WOMEN	10,7	13,3	21,2	12,3	7,4	6,5	10,4	14,2	6,3

COMPARATIVE TABLE OF 1980 SUICIDE RATES IN EUROPE (PER 100,000 DEATHS)

Former Mozambican Foreign Minister Joaquim Chissano, 47, elected by the FRELIMO's (Mozambique Liberation Front) 130-member central committee on November 3 to replace Samora Machel (who was killed in an air crash), reaffirmed the government's Marxist-Leninist political line. Nevertheless, he qualified this by saying the party had to take the "region's economic and political realities" into account. The Mozambican National Resistance Movement (RNM or Renamo), which has been stepping up its attacks, declared that Chissano's election "represented no substantial change."

Continuity carries the day in Maputo

By René Damien

MOZAMBICAN leaders, along with foreign observers, forecast almost unanimously that after Eduardo Mondlane, then Samora Machel, Joaquim Alberto Chissano would be elected to the FRELIMO leadership. The character and career of one of FRELIMO's founding fathers made his election practically inevitable following Machel's death.

Born to peasants in the province of Gaza on October 22, 1939, Chissano attended the Lourenco Marques grammar school. There, he soon became involved in the anti-colonial struggle. He joined a group called the "Core of African Secondary School Pupils" — the adjective "African" acquired its full significance in an education system monopolised by whites and a handful of mixed-race pupils — of which he became president. In 1960 he went to study in Portugal, but fled the country the following year, and, after a few months spent in France, went to Dar-es-Salaam, headquarters of the Mozambican anti-colonial movements.

This is where he set up the National Union of Mozambican Students. As the leader of a whole body of educated blacks he took part in the founding of FRELIMO. At its first congress in 1962, he was appointed to two of its highest bodies — the central committee and the executive committee. The new President therefore played a crucial role both militarily and politically in the liberation struggle.

It was in 1974 when he took part in the negotiations following the coup d'etat in Portugal and his later appointment as Prime Minister of the transitional government (1974/75) that Chissano was first seen in public. The skill he showed at the time and the popularity he acquired suggested he would become one of independent Mozambique's leading figures.

But this did not happen. True he was elected at the third and fourth Congresses, then re-elected to the third rank of the FRELIMO hierarchy and appointed Foreign Minister, a job he has held to general approval without a break since independence. But his authority did not seem to extend much further.

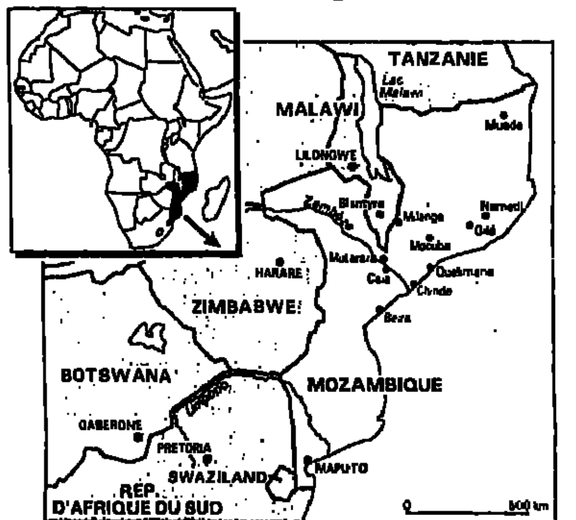
By nature he tends to be a federator. Tall, very slim, his face ringed by a meticulously-trimmed beard and elegantly dressed, he is as collected as Samora Machel was turbulent. Open, but cautious, he will take good care not to say or do anything to give South Africa any possible excuse to step up the pressure on Mozambique. The breakdown of the Nkomati agreement will not be able to be pinned on Maputo.

Continuity would therefore appear to have carried the day. Yet, at the same time, most Mozambican leaders know very well that the time for change has come. And it is probably because he had sensed it and publicly declared it that Joaquim Chissano was chosen. In January 1986, breaking the sacrosanct rule of unanimity, he upheld ideas before the People's Assembly that were in contradiction to the arguments fielded by the FRELIMO's "doctrinaire" wing. He held that the state could not claim to be all-powerful and present everywhere while at the same time proving incapable of shouldering the responsibilities it had assigned itself.

FRELIMO has probably played one of its last trump cards in its struggle for survival.

(November 5)

Rebels at turning point?



By Michel Bole-Richard

MAPUTO — A Soviet freighter from Odessa was unloading weapons, munitions, truck wheels and other goods on a practically deserted wharf. There was no special surveillance other than the few soldiers who had come to take delivery of the war material. The big brother from the East has been keeping the FPLM (People's Forces for the Liberation of Mozambique) supplied in their ten-year-old struggle against the RNM. The supplies are particularly welcome at this moment as Maputo is currently having to face the fiercest offensive launched since the war began.

It is a campaign in which the RNM has without a doubt scored successes, as not only have the rebels taken several small towns, but they have managed to hold on to them. Most are situated close to the tongue of Malawi territory that juts into Mozambique where their attacks began on September 25. Mutarara, Caia, Milange and Gilé have fallen to the rebels, who are also claiming to have taken Nametil and the Muede military camp close to the Tanzanian border. Zumbo, which is quite close to Zambia, is said to have been completely destroyed.

The RNM says its next objective is Chinde on the Mozambican Canal, but above all Mocuba, about 100 kilometres north of Quelimane, where the general headquarters of the Zambezia province armed forces are located.

The rebel attack is led by a force of between 8,000 and 12,000 men who for the first time seem to be standing up to the Mozambican army. A governmental counter-attack, backed up by the Zimbabwean army, aimed at regaining Mutarara was beaten off by the RNM's superior firepower. Normally, the rebels avoid pitched battles with regular soldiers, preferring guerrilla attacks.

Are we witnessing a turning point in the war? We need to wait awhile to see whether the RNM can hold on to the towns it takes, whether it can push on with this unprecedented attack and proclaim a part of the territory as a "liberated zone". Very little information is available on the extent of the fighting and the real nature of the clashes. And it is also not known whether its rear support bases installed in Malawi are still available to the RNM.

On September 11 Samora Machel flew to Blantyre (Malawi's economic capital, its administrative capital being Lilongwe) along with Zambian President Kenneth Kaunda and Zimbabwean Prime Minister Robert Mugabe to tell Malawi's President Hastings Kamuzu Banda that he should close down the RNM bases on his territory or run the risk of his landlocked country being completely blockaded. On September 17, a 16-member Malawi delegation headed by John Tembo, one of President Banda's closest aides, arrived in Maputo to inform Samora Machel that Malawi had agreed to put a stop to the RNM's activities on its territory and approved the setting up of a joint security commission to settle the question. But this was not done and on September 25 the RNM penetrated deep into Mozambican territory, threatening the whole of the north and the Beira Corridor.

The Mozambican authorities are worried that Mozambique might eventually be cut into two and that what has up to now been basically a guerrilla movement might turn into open war. Before he died, Machel had personally begun reorganising the army. The military structure in the Tete and Zambezia provinces were changed and the FPLM's Chief of Army Staff Sebastoa Mabote was replaced by Armando Panguene, the armed forces' political commissar.

Poorly equipped, demoralised, badly paid and indifferently officered, FRELIMO's troops have for the past four years at least been in no shape to counter the RNM's activities. Desertions are frequent. Recently, 1,500 soldiers went over to Malawi with their arms and equipment. Although numerically superior, with its 30,000 troops, the FPLM has often proved to be a rag-tag and indisciplined army which sometimes takes out its frustrations on the civilian population.

It will take more time to turn the FPLM into an efficient fighting force; its soldiers have in many cases been fighting for six or seven years, and somtimes more, without hope of being demobilised. Conscription does not work and young men who try to dodge the draft are forcibly enlisted.

With this forgotten conflict entering a new phase, there are many observers in Maputo who feel they are witnessing a "Ugandanisation" of a war which could eventually engulf all the countries in the region, including South Africa, currently accused in Mozambique of manipulating it.

(November 5)

Canvas of madness

By Emmanuel de Roux

"LA LEÇON DE CHARCOT, Voyage dans une Toile", the current exhibition at the Musée de l'Assistance Publique, is devoted to Jean-Martin Charcot (1825-93), the celebrated French neurologist who was Sigmund Freud's teacher.

The organiser of the exhibition, Nadine Simon, has articulated it around the well-known painting of André Brouillet, "A Clinical Lecture by Professor Charcot at the Salpêtrière", which shows Charcot describing the case of a hysterical women patient to an audience of leading public figures of the time.

The writer, Léon Daudet (son of Alphonse), who knew him well, described the scene as the Salpêtrière (half-hospital, half lunatic asylum) as follows: "The arrival of the director each morning was something of an event. . . He greeted his audience with a sweeping glance and perfunctorily shook hands with his assistant and his house doctor (extending two fingers to the former, and only one to the latter). And that was all. He would then walk to his cloakroom, which was next to a room used both as a laboratory, museum and waiting room. His assistant told him briefly what developments there had been since the previous day. Charcot murmured a few rapid, telegraphic instructions, and then set off for the spacious, rather dimly lit lecture hall that is familiar from so many photographs and engravings."

Although Brouillet's painting has been reproduced in countless books, few people have seen the original. Apart from the current show, the only other occasion on which it left the Lyons hospital where it normally hangs was the Vienna exhibition at the Centre Pompidou in Paris earlier this year.

Yet the painting, executed in the best *pompier* style, had its moment of glory: it was one of the centrepieces of the 1887 Salon, and even outshone another medically-inspired painting shown at the same Salon — "Before the Operation", by Brouillet's rival, Henri Gervex.

Gervex's work, also on show at the Musée de l'Assistance Publique exhibition, will subsequently be given a permanent home in the Musée de 19ème Siècle, to be inaugurated in the former Gare d'Orsay in December.

The cream of Parisian high society used to attent Charcot's lectures at the Salpêtrière. Brouillet's huge canvas, although artistically undistinguished, has the merit of faithfully reproducing the scene for posterity.

In the middle of the lecture hall stands the stern-looking Charcot. Next to him, in full hysterical crisis, is Blanche Wittmann, known as "the queen of hysterics", who has swooned and is being supported by Dr Joseph Babinski, who later radically challenged his master's theories and did pioneering work in neurosurgery.

On the other side of the room sit those who have come to watch the performance — a mixture of pupils and important public figures. Those who can be identified include Charcot's own son, Jean-Baptiste, who later became a famous seafarer and explorer, Alfred Nacquet, architect of new divorce legislation, Jules Claretie, director-general of the Comédie-Française, and the journalist Philippe Burty, an enthusiastic supporter of the impressionists.

The exhibition's various elements are constructed around this centrepiece. It describes the rise of one of the medicine's most celebrated mandarins and pillar of the still infant Third Repubic. It illustrates that curious pathological phenomenon, *le grande hystérie* (where a comprehensive hysterical attack takes place), which, so to speak, went in and out of fashion within the space of only a few years. And it asks an important question: to what extent was the illness imaginary?

By the time Charcot was appointed chief physician at the Salpêtrière in 1862, the former general hospital has been turned into a women's poorhouse. It also housed a lunatic asylum. The drawings that Daniel Vierge made of it for a contemporary illustrated magazine give a fairly horrific picture of the place.

It was there that Charcot spent almost all his career. He did pioneering work in a relatively new medical speciality, neurology. His work on cerebral localisations, among other things, earned him an international reputation. In 1882, he took up the chair of diseases of the nervous system that had been created for him.

He was showered with honours when he began studying hysteria, which soon became his speciality — almost to the point of obsession. He regarded it as an illness like any other. True, the symptoms were of a mental nature, but they could be traced to a specific cerebral localisation.

In a vain attempt to pin down connections between hysteria and the anatomy, Charcot produced endless accounts of its manifestations and had them photographed, drawn, moulded, and sculpted. He even sought them in post mortem examinations. His head of laboratory, Dr Charles Richet, who was also a meticulous draughtsman, illustrated the deformations and crises suffered by patients and other aspects of the "pathological material" of hysteria.

Charcot's theories were soon forgotten. But a young Viennese physician, not yet famous enough to be included by André Brouillet in his painting, assiduously attended Charcot's lectures at the Salpêtrière.

He noted the various physical disorders connected with hysteria and above all the effect of hypnosis and suggestion as practised by Charcot in the course of studying his patients' behaviour. His observations led him to formulate the notion of the unconscious.

Freud was spellbound by Charcot: "No other human being has ever affected me in the same way," he wrote. Before returning to Vienna, he sought permission to translate some of Jean-Martin Charcot's works into German. And four years after his Paris stay, as a token of his gratitude, Freud called his second child Jean Martin.

"La Leçon de Charcot, Voyage dans une Toile", at the Musée de l'Assistance Publique, 47 quai de la Tournelle. Until December 31.

(October 4)

PM in very hot water

Continued from page 11

fessed he had mistaken the Washington Times for the Washington Post.

Referring to the Washington Times article in detail, Chirac formally denied only the Israeli secret service's involvement in the London bomb attempt. "Not for one moment did the Germans or the French imagine any such thing," he said. "It's absurd." He also pointed out that, in answer to a question put by De Borchgrave concerning Mossad, he replied: "I'm accusing no one."

As for the rest, Chirac did not seem to particularly regret the statements attributed to him — statements basically aimed at preserving good relations with Syria even if that means throwing doubt on the "evidence" produced by the British, although other French officials regard tham as valid. The Prime Minister in particular admitted talking to De Borchgrave about the attitude adopted by the European countries at the EEC foreign ministers' meeting in Luxembourg on October 26. The ministers failed to agree a common policy towards Syria.

On that day, Chirac was in Frankfurt with President Mitterrand attending a Franco-German summit. "We were kept informed of the discussions going on in Luxembourg in dribs and drabs," explained Chirac. "We therefore held consultations with the German leaders on the basis of information which we later had to acknowledge was incomplete. So I told your colleague on the Washington Times that, first, we were in no position to judge the accuracy of the evidence produced by Britain and, secondly, that we did not want to comment, given the situation we were in, on an operation about whose origins, nature and background we knew nothing."

Chirac's explanations do not basically contradict the statements attributed to him by the Washington Times editor-in-chief. They are merely couched in far more diplomatic language. But anybody who has had the opportunity for discussing matters in private with Chirac knows quite well that he does occasionally very easily depart from such diplomatic niceties.

The solution to the real problem facing Chirac in this case today does not depend on him, but on De Borchgrave. The latter in fact says he has the tape record of the Prime Minister's remarks (he spoke in French) and is threatening to publish it in full if Chirac persists in denying them. The American journalist, who never quotes Chirac directly in his article, claims to be reporting the Prime Minister's remarks "practically verbatim". Borchgrave says that eight minutes into the interview Chirac told him he wanted to speak frankly but without being quoted directly, "or you go ahead and quote me directly, but in that case I won't have very interesting things to tell you." De Borchgrave chose the former option, and he says Chirac told him: "I trust you; you'll report my remarks fairly."

Chirac did not formally contradict this version of the events, but said on Friday he refused to give an interview and that the conversation he had with De Borchgrave was supposed to have been "off the record". He acknowledged that De Borchgrave did have a tape recorder, "but I thought he had stopped it."

This shows the gravity of the consequences posed by the tape that De Borchgrave says he has, even if Chirac has said he did not care if it were published.

Such details aside, it is in fact the Prime Minister's credibility and his Middle East policy that could be on the line. Even if Chirac had a few reasons for being irritated with Washington's sermonising on the terrorism issue, there are many people who would not understand how he, even hiding behind Kohl and Genscher, could have lent credence to the idea that the Israeli secret service had contemplated killing several hundred passengers of an El Al aircraft.

(November 9/10)

Missile submarine building programme gets go-ahead

The French cabinet has adopted a F474 billion five-year (1987-1991) military spending programme — the fifth since 1960. It proposes to spend a total of F473,127 million (approximately £47 billion) on the three services and the gendarmerie.

The programme calls for several initiatives in the nuclear, strategic, prestrategic and conventional fields. The construction of nuclear submarines fitted with the six-warhead M4 missile will be continued. But a new generation of missile-carrying nuclear submarines will be undertaken immmediately. Their capability will be improved with the development of the ten-warhead M5 missile. A new land-based ballistic missile is also to be built by 1996 to replace the missiles now deployed in silos.

The military procurement plan prepared by Prime Minister Jacques Chirac and Defence Minister André Giraud also earmarks funds for the development of several other projects, such a nuclear-powered aircraft carrier, an airborne early warning system, a pre-strategic weapons system like the Hadès, the Leclerc battle tank, observation and communications satellites and a new fighter plane derived from Dassault's Rafale.

France's conventional forces "will be provided with modem weapons systems": in particular, 1,100 battle tanks, 500 artillery pieces, 8,000 armoured vehicles, 500 helicopters and 450 front-line fighter planes.

For the first time a French government has formally declared it would not rule out manufacturing chemical weapons if the necessity arose. The draft programme has been approved by President Mitterrand.

By Jacques Isnard

FRANÇOIS MITTERRAND has marked out his territory as C-in-C of the armed forces. For himself, but also for his future successor. That is, for the benefit of the present Prime Minister as well if that successor turned out to be Jacques Chirac, although the latter has since March this year been going out of his way to point out his constitutional prerogatives in defence matters. The 1987-1991 military budget which was adopted by the cabinet on November 5 confirms this situation. The head of state is responsible for strategy, hence the utilisation of nuclear forces whatever the category to which they belong. For his part, the Prime Minister proposes, through the budgetary options he takes, a defence resources policy.

The Elysée and the Matignon have been observing each other very closely and even suspiciously. There was no shortage of accusations, based on nothing more than assumptions, during the time when the budget was being drafted. And these were sometimes fuelled by Chirac's ambiguous remarks, such as those he made about nuclear deterrence to the Institute of Advanced National Defence Studies (September 12).

Two examples. The first has to do with pre-strategic nuclear weapons, formerly known as tactical weapons. The second concerns the range of hardware earmarked for replacing in 1996 the ageing Mirage-IV bombers and the missiles buried in silos on the Albion plateau which could become vulnerable to a high-precision strike. Two subjects of vital importance for French deterrent policy up to the end of the century.

First, pre-strategic armaments, with the Pluton (and, shortly, Hadès) missiles and the Mirage-IIIs, Jaguars or Super-Etendards (and soon, the Mirage 2000N). By qualifying the use of this category of armaments as a simple "warning" designed to halt the momentum of an aggression and by advocating in advance a "diversified" utilisation of such weapons, the Prime Minister gave the impression he was considering the hypothesis of a utilisation tailored to conventional battlefield situations. This is a departure from the policy of holding out possible recourse to strategic weapons as a deterrent threat. Shortly afterwards, President Mitterrand, speaking at the Caylus military base, reminded his audience that nuclear deterrence was an indivisible whole and responsibility for it fell on him. The strategic arsenal included pre-strategic weapons; as defined in the Gaullist doctrine, they formed an ultimate massive and brutal warning and there was no question of splitting them up.

On this point, the military programme returns to orthodoxy. The pre-strategic weapon, it notes, has a "value as an ultimate warning" before recourse to strategic armaments. The head of state guarantees a deterrence which "forms a whole" and which can be "neither encroached upon", "split up" nor "side-stepped".

The modernising of France's strategic arsenal — nuclear missile-carrying submarines, nuclear bombers and land-based missiles in the Haute-Provence — has become a central issue in discussions between services with several rival projects being advocated over the past few years; at the same time it also gives rise to political differences. Even before the March 16 elections Chirac had opted for a "mobile" land-based missile which in peacetime would be stationed at a base, but in times of high international tension would be driven in convoy around the country.

Speaking at the institute Chirac repeated it was essential to undertake "without delay" the development of the so-called "aleatory (random) deployment" missile. While Mitterrand shortly afterwards insisted that the development of a "mobile" missile should not be undertaken at the expense of updating the nuclear submarines by refitting them with M5 missiles.

Without dismissing both arguments, the draft military programme gave priority to Mitterrand's choice, while putting off consideration of the mobile missile sought by Chirac until after 1988, when the presidential election is due to take place.

(November 7)



The Washington Post

What Happened In Tehran?

THERE IS STILL no clear statement from the American government about the allegations of arms-for-hostages dealing first reported by Iran. The result is that the picture of events drawn by Tehran continues to dominate people's view. It is a picture stunningly different from President Reagan's stated policy of trying to contain the war effort and the militant doctrine of an erratic, verging-on-fanatic, aggressive, revolutionary, terrorist regime. According to the Iranians, the United States secretly accepted them as a negotiating partner and arranged arms deliveries in return for release of American hostages. The last American initiative reported by Tehran was the visit of former national security adviser Robert McFarlane two months ago.

American officials have indicated that the operation was tightly held, mostly in the White House, so that it wouldn't leak. And it didn't leak at this end, but the tight hold may also have meant that the executive departments, including the CIA, didn't get fully consulted. There are plain indications that the secretaries of state and defense opposed concessions of political and military substance to a state; 1) practicing terrorism, 2) invading a neighbor and 3) threatening the whole region. If the two Cabinet departments did not get to register their judgments in a timely and orderly way, a gross lapse of policy-making procedure is evident.

It is further suggested in defense of the Iranian connection that it was working to help free hostages of old terrorism and perhaps to diminish sponsorship of new terrorism. Further, it was giving Washington access to "moderates" who might steer an enduringly strategic country back into the realm of reason in a post-Khomeini era.

It remains to be demonstrated, however, that the Iranians were not simply taking Mr. Reagan for a ride, arresting a new hostage for each one released and accepting arms without modifying revolutionary goals. The political murk in Iran, not to speak of the American record in operating there, does not impart confidence that there is a reliable moderate faction among the mullahs or that the United States can play effectively to it if there is.

The combination of Iran and American hostages discombobulates American presidents. Jimmy Carter finally went "Reagan," launching a military raid, and Ronald Reagan went "Carter," launching a diplomatic mission. Perhaps the Reagan initiative will turn out to be better conceived and executed. But it is not possible to tell without the facts. The president's responsibilities to the remaining hostages cannot long put off an accounting of this strange affair.

U.S. Credibility A Casualty

By William Drozdiak

WASHINGTON — The revelations of secret U.S.-Iranian contacts involving the supply of military equipment in return for help in freeing American hostages in Lebanon have stirred new suspicions among allies and rivals in the Middle East and damaged the credibility of the U.S. policy of ostracizing supporters of terrorism, according to government officials and analysts in Europe and the Middle East. The clandestine links between Washington and Tehran have cast new light on a continuing power struggle among rival factions within Iran jockeying for power under Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, 86 and reportedly ailing from a recent heart attack.

But the first casualty of the U.S.-Iranian connection appears to be U.S. leadership in the drive to isolate nations accused of backing terrorism. European allies have been quick to underscore the hypocrisy of advocating an arms embargo against Iran and sanctions against Libya while the United States was engaging in sporadic arms shipments to Tehran to secure the release of the hostages.

"The American government is now going to find itself in a position where its high moral tone on negotiating with terrorists is not going to be taken all that seriously," said an Italian official.

Ironically, the U.S. government in recent months has closely coordinated with France its efforts to free the hostages. France is seeking the release of six French hostages believed to be held by Shiite Moslem militants in Lebanon.

The United States and France concluded as early as last year that Iran, and not Syria, was the key bargaining partner if efforts were to succeed in gaining the freedom of the captives. At the same time, both countries hoped to use their respective hostage situations to influence the political power struggle in Tehran and enhance the position of people believed to be moderates who might be willing to pursue more friendly relations with the West in the twilight of Khomeini's rule.

But both countries have found their efforts to deal with the Islamic fundamentalist government frustrated by the capricious forces of revolutionary Iran and its enduring xenophobia toward the West.

In March the French government dispatched Eric Rouleau, a former correspondent for the newspaper Le Monde with wide experience in the Middle East, to Tehran as a special envoy to discuss the release of the French hostages. Rouleau was well received and held encouraging talks, but later his visit was denounced by hard-liners in the Iranian government who foiled chances of getting Shiite militants to free the hostages in Lebanon.

The Rouleau mission bears similarities to the trip by Robert C McFarlane, the former national security adviser who visited Tehran in September to discuss a hostage release in exchange for weapons and spare parts to shore up Iran's sagging military effort. In addition, McFarlane reportedly sought to pursue broader goals of curbing all Iranian support for terrorism abroad and a general improvement in U.S.-Iranian relations. Diplomatic ties were broken in 1980 when Iran was holding American citizens hostage.

The McFarlane mission was first reported last week by Ash Shiraa, a pro-Syrian magazine published in Lebanon. According to the magazine's editor, the account of the McFarlane visit was leaked by supporters of Mehdi Hashemi, a relative of Khomeini's chosen successor, Ayatollah Hossein Ali Montazeri, who is in charge of Iran's support for fundamentalist Islamic movements abroad.

Hashemi was arrested recently on treason and murder charges in what his supporters contended was a power grab by Speaker of Parliament Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani and Prime Minister Mir Hossein Mousavi. Both men are known as pragmatic moderates, who are prepared to forsake the export of revolution in favor of less hostile relations with Saudi Arabia and other Persian Gulf nations.

The account of McFarlane's visit was clearly intended to embarrass Rafsanjani's faction by tainting him publicly with connections to "the Great Satan".

Continued on page 16

Shultz Protested At Secret Deal With Iran

By Walter Pincus

WASHINGTON — Secretary of State George P. Shultz protested to President Reagan that a secret White House plan to obtain the release of U.S. hostages in Lebanon by permitting shipments of military equipment to Iran contradicted U.S. policy against negotiating with terrorist states, informed sources said last week.

Although the clandestine White House program proceeded anyway, the sources added, it was halted briefly after the release of the Rev. Benjamin Weir in September 1985. At that time, the half-dozen or so senior State Department officials who knew about it argued that exchanging military goods for hostages could lead to more kidnappings of Americans.

But the White House resumed the program — with at least some of the goods apparently traveling circuitous routes from Israel to European countries and finally to Iran in an eventually successful effort to free two more hostages. In recent months, there was also hope that the program would promote better ties with Iranian politicians and military leaders jockeying to succeed the aging Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, the sources said.

Simultaneously, the administration was reassuring Iran's bitter enemy, Iraq, of American neutrality in the 6-year-old Persian Gulf war. The Iraqis are said to have responded by promising to restrain their support of terrorist groups and by placing terrorist Mohammed Abu Abbas under house arrest. In July, Abbas was convicted in absentia in Italy of involvement in the hijacking of the Achille Lauro cruise ship which resulted in the murder of American Leon Klinghoffer. It is not clear what the Iraqis plan to do with Abbas.

The secret White House program was originally directed by then-national security affairs adviser Robert C. McFarlane and later by Lt. Col. Oliver C. North, a deputy director of the National Security Council staff, sources said.

U.S. intelligence sources said McFarlane had been conducting talks with Iranians and their intermediaries for more than a year in European cities and Tehran. The discussions included an Iranian need for "defensive" military equipment, sources said, along with long-term financial stability that would occur with a rise in world oil prices.

On Sept. 14, 1985, according to news service reports, Turkish sources said a DC-8 cargo plane flying from Tabriz in Iran to Spain had landed at a Tel Aviv airport after developing communications problems. Last week, informed sources said that the plane, which the Turkish sources thought was American-owned, had carried a shipment of military equipment that originated initially in Israel and had been arranged after talks between the American officials and Iranians. That same day, Weir was quietly released in Lebanon after 16 months in captivity by the pro-Iranian Islamic Jihad group which had been holding him and demanding the release of 17 terrorists in Kuwait prisons. A similar shipment took place last July, another source said, around the time Jenco was released.

The first public word of the program came last week when the speaker of the Iranian parliament, Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani, said McFarlane and four others had gone to Tehran in September aboard a plane carrying weapons and spare parts. That disclosure was apparently the result of political infighting in Iran which pitted Rafsanjani against Muslim fundamentalists, who opposed his dealing with the Americans.

"We were surprised the Iranians kept the secret this long," said one source familiar with the program. The Iranian disclosure, sources said, may have ended chances for the quick release of two additional hostages held by the Islamic Jihad, which has close ties to Iran. The release of David P. Jacobsen — as well as the freeing of Weir last year and the Rev. Lawrence Jenco in July — were tied to shipments of military cargo.

U.S. sources who confirmed that McFarlane had traveled to Tehran said he was there to discuss the hostages, to urge Iran's leaders to end support of terrorism and to seek an end to the war with Iraq. There had been earlier trips to Tehran by North and others.

Sources said the covert White House program began in 1985 at the time of the TWA airline hijacking after it became apparent that U.S. hostages held by the pro-Iranian Islamic Jihad would not respond to pressure for their release unless it came from Tehran. At that point Israeli officials who had kept contacts in Iran proposed opening up a channel of communications for the Americans. As discussion progressed, the Iranian officials made it clear they wanted military spare parts and equipment if anything was to be done on the hostage issue.

Subsequent shipments were said to have been carried out with Israeli and other third-country personnel purchasing the arms, which were paid for by the Iranians as the United States promised not to interfere. At the same time, however, Justice Department officials were prosecuting individuals for attempting to covertly sell U.S. arms to Iran. In the most publicized case, a retired Israeli general and more than a dozen others others face trial in New York next February for allegedly attempting to sell Iran $2 billion in American weapons.

The administration also has repeatedly warned other nations not to peddle weapons to Tehran. At the White House, spokesman Peter Roussel said last week, "The United States has systematically urged third countries not to sell arms to Iran as the only effective way to bring Iran quickly to accept mediation and negotiation (in the Iran-Iraq war)." Last week White House spokesman Larry Speakes repeated the administration's longstanding public policy that "as long as Iran advocates the use of terrorism, the U.S. embargo will continue."

Behind that public policy, sources said, the McFarlane discussions were conducted without the knowledge of key State Department officials. "It was held very tightly," one official said, and was the source of serious concern by the few who were aware of it. "It was another sign of the internal conflicts within the administration," he added.

As one official put it, the McFarlane negotiations "would have been seen by everyone involved (at the State Department) as a mockery and betrayal of the administration's antiterrorism campaign. It would also be seen in the Arab world as an American double cross of Iraq and would have potentially disastrous consequences for our efforts to assure moderate Arab governments that the United States can play a reliable, honest broker role in the region."

The precise contents of the military shipments to Iran remain unclear and were the most "tightly held" secret in the operation, one source said. "It was substantial and some of it was sophisticated." The Los Angeles Times reported that the cargo included ground-to-ground missiles, spare parts for F4 Phantom jets, American-made radar systems, C130 transport planes and other war material.

In Denmark, a spokesman for the Danish Sailors Union said Danish ships had been used to carry American-made arms from Israel to Iran. The union said that at least 3,600 tons of U.S.-made arms were carried to Iran recently.

State Department officials attempted to reassure Iraqi and other Arab diplomats that the United States had not abandoned its previous policy of being even-handed in the Gulf war. The Iraqi ambassador met with Assistant Secretary of State Richard W. Murphy, while Saudi Arabia's ambassador met with John M. Poindexter, the president's national security affairs adviser.

At a bill-signing ceremony, President Reagan refused comment but said, "I suggest and appeal to all of you with regard to this, that the speculation, the commenting and all . . . to us has no foundation, that all of that is making it more difficult for us in our effort to get the other hostages free."

The Washington Post

Change In The Senate

THE predicters were, as usual, wrong — or at least not quite right. Just as the Republican capture of the Senate in 1980 had been pretty much an unforeseen event, so too was last week's outcome. The Democrats won a handsome victory in the Senate. It was not even close to being the squeaker we all foresaw. A year ago a devoted Democrat warned her colleagues that they had better get their act together in case they won the Senate in 1986 and thus, controlling Congress, were seen by the electorate in 1988 as having a considerable responsibility for the condition of the country — whatever it might be by then. This theme has been sounded repeatedly recently, and now, amid the congratulations, the pointed and relevant questions are being asked: Is Robert Byrd really the person an ascendant and ambitious Democratic Senate majority wishes to have as its leader? Do the Democrats have the discipline and imagination to come forward with plausible alternatives to administration policy? What are they for? Etc.

Our question is somewhat different. It is: Can the Democrats be as effective an opposition to the Republican administration as the Republican-run Senate has been? Yes . . . we know: within the Republican membership of the Senate, from Jesse Helms, say, to Lowell Weicker, there are political chasms as wide and temperamental differences as sharp as anything you find on the Democrats' side of the aisle. And it is also true that on various large major issues the Senate Republicans have encouraged Mr. Reagan in some of his most misbegotten ideas. But it is also the case and, in our view, the central fact of the way the country has been governed in the past several years that determined, intelligent Republican initiatives and/or resistance in the Senate have been a force for good. Dole, Simpson, Lugar, Kassebaum, Cohen, Packwood, Domenici — there are more, but these are among the many Senate Republicans who have made their weight felt in invaluable ways on everything from fiscal policy to the Philippines and South Africa sanctions in the Reagan years.

Our point is not that the Democratic Senate should treat Mr. Reagan with the same deference the Republicans did (even when those Republicans were fighting him). The country did not elect a Democrat majority to play at being something else. But Bob Dole's Republicans surely did give some lessons in how to influence an administration to good effect. The Democrats, who are — and are meant to be — the real opposition take over from pros.

LETTER

A French Reply

I WAS astonished to read The Washington Post editorial (November 9) describing the French policy toward terrorism as a "cave-in". The facts and conclusions of this editorial are false.

Reference is made to "varying degrees of official confirmation" of alleged French arms sales to Syria and to compromises with terrorists and their supporters. A review of statements made by members of the French government shows that these "varying degrees of confirmation" amount to a sweeping denial of the charges levelled by The Post.

On Oct. 23, the minister of foreign affairs, Jean-Bernard Raimond, spoke as follows to the National Assembly: "The requests for authorization [to sell arms to Syria] that have been submitted for approval by the authorities during recent months have been refused. In the past, in 1982 and 1984 in particular, large contracts were signed for sensitive materials such as armed helicopters and large quantities of missiles. The deliveries still to be made under these contracts have been frozen."

This clearly indicates that, according to the French foreign affairs minister, there are no arms sales to Syria. If these assertions can even remotely be interpreted as confirmations, how can a denial be worded so that it will be comprehensible to The Post's editorial writers?

The Post goes on to refer to "expectations of leniency" toward the Lebanese militant Georges Abdallah currently being held in Paris, citing the same dubious authority upon which the earlier erroneous charges concerning arms sales were based. French authorities have stated clearly that "there are not and there will not be any negotiations with terrorists". The minister of the interior has indicated that there was no question of freeing Mr. Abdallah, who will stand trial in accordance with national law.

The rumors of "deals" with this terrorist or his supporters were described by the minister of the interior as "sheer imagination" of the type found in second-rate spy novels. In France, as in the United States, the judicial branch is independent of the executive branch. No deals for leniency can be negotiated by the French government, for any such attempt would violate the fundamental principles upon which democratic institutions common to both France and the United States are based. The minister of foreign affairs, in a television interview on Oct. 26, also stated that "France concluded no bargain and no 'arrangement' in regard to the Georges Ibrahim Abdallah affair in order to put a halt to that wave of terrorism in France".

One can only feel amazement at the extraordinary difference between what French officials have actually said and the manner in which their remarks were reported in the editorial in question. If members of the public read "categorical denial" for "varying degrees of confirmation," they will arrive at the truth.

Philippe Faure,
Director of Press
and Information,
Embassy of France.
Washington.

Credibility

Continued from page 15

Rafsanjani quickly responded with a speech mocking McFarlane's attempts at brokering a hostage release. In remarks published at length by Iran's official news agency, Rafsanjani said McFarlane and four companions arrived in Tehran disguised as airplane crewmen bearing Irish passports. He said they came with such tokens of good will as a Bible signed by President Reagan, several pistols and a cake in the shape of a key symbolizing a possible breakthrough to better relations between the United States and Iran.

The struggle appeared to intensify last week, as 200 more supporters of Montazeri were reportedly arrested.

Threat From Pakistan Bomb

INTELLIGENCE reports indicate that while Ronald Reagan and Mikhail Gorbachev were at Reykjavik talking about abolishing nuclear weapons, President Zia ul-Haq of Pakistan was making dramatic progress toward acquiring them.

Pakistan is deadly serious about getting the bomb. And its seemingly unstoppable weapons program poses, for the rest of the world, a deadly threat of nuclear war. Most specialists believe that nuclear weapons will be used not in a war between the two superpowers, but by a Third World country such as India or Pakistan.

The Pakistan situation is doubly dangerous for the United States because it represents a chronic failure of American policy. We have tried unsuccessfully for more than a decade to restrain the Pakistani nuclear program. We have failed, in part, because other policy concerns have predominated. Pakistan provides us with intelligence-gathering opportunities to monitor strategic programs in the Soviet Union; it also allows us to pass supplies through its territory to the resistance movement in Afghanistan.

President Zia knows that he has us over a barrel. After losing Iran in the late 1970s, the United States can't afford to lose Pakistan.

Yet by failing to stop Pakistan's nuclear program, the administration risks seeing a crucial ally involved in a dangerous conflict on the Indian subcontinent. After rumors of a preemptive Indian strike against Pakistan's nuclear facilities in 1984, and again after a recent Soviet statement that it would not tolerate a Pakistani bomb, the United States assured those countries that we were dealing with the situation.

Those assurances look increasingly hollow now, after disclosure in The Washington Post this past week of U.S. intelligence reports that Pakistan has made dramatic progress this year in its nuclear weapons program, including tests of non-nuclear explosives (that can be used in triggering a nuclear bomb) on Sept. 18 and Sept. 21.

The danger is that the Indians will do by military force what the United States has failed to do by diplomacy: stop the Pakistani nuclear program. A preemptive strike at the Pakistani nuclear enrichment plant at Kahuta by a frustrated India, possibly backed by the Soviet Union, could embroil us in an enormously dangerous situation.

Why have we failed to halt this growing danger?

The story begins in the early 1970s. In 1974, India became the first Third World country to carry out a nuclear explosion and the first new entrant in the nuclear club since China exploded its bomb a decade earlier. India had been working on its nuclear program since the 1940s, with significant peaceful assistance from a number of countries. Despite complaints and warnings from the United States, India used a Canadian-built research reactor loaded with U.S.-supplied heavy water to produce plutonium for its nuclear device.

Faced with defeat in the 1971 war and with Indian progress toward nuclear status, Pakistan's then premier, Ali Bhutto, had vowed that Pakistan would eat grass if necessary to keep up with the Indians. If India and the Hindus were to have the bomb, Pakistan would ensure that there also would be an Islamic bomb. Pakistan faced important obstacles to its aspiration. It was poor, and its nuclear program was much smaller than that of India.

The 1973 oil crisis proved to be a windfall. As oil prices shot up, states such as Libya were flush with new money they were willing to provide to Pakistan. Rising oil prices also created a boom for nuclear energy. Fearing a shortage of natural uranium, a number of countries promoted the sale of reprocessing plants that could extract plutonium from spent reactor fuel. That plutonium could be used to fuel reactors or it could be used to make a bomb. In 1975, Pakistan ordered a large reprocessing plant from France.

When the Carter administration came into office, cancellation of the Pakistan reprocessing plant was a high priority. Pakistan denied any intent to misuse the plant, and France accepted those assurances. In 1977, however, the United States presented to French officials compelling evidence of Pakistan's true intent, and France quietly changed its position during the year that we managed to keep this diplomacy secret. Termination of the large reprocessing plant deprived Pakistan of its quickest route to the acquisition of large amounts of weapons-usable materials.

We closed the front door, but soon discovered that Pakistan had opened a back door. In the early 1970s, a Pakistan scientist working at the Netherlands plant of Urenco — a British, Dutch and German consortium that enriched uranium by using gas centrifuges — stole plans from the plant and returned to Pakistan to try to replicate the process at Kahuta.

For the next several years,

By Joseph S. Nye Jr.

America and Pakistan engaged in a cat-and-mouse game, as Pakistan tried covertly to purchase critical equipment from abroad. The United States urged other countries to turn down such exports, even when they had possible non-nuclear as well as nuclear uses. Those efforts slowed the Pakistan enrichment program, but by 1984 the Kahuta plant was running. Recent intelligence reports suggest that it is now producing weapons-grade material.

The Carter administration cut off aid to Pakistan in 1979, as required by congressional legislation, but existing aid levels were too small to be effective sanctions. In any case, the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan at the end of the year provided another windfall for the Pakistani nuclear program. The United States now needed Pakistani help in transferring assistance to the Afghan resistance. In 1981, Congress passed a \$3.2 billion economic and military assistance package for Pakistan that included 40 advanced F-16 fighters to be delivered up to 1987. The law specified that the aid would be terminated if Pakistan detonated a nuclear device. Now the carrot was large enough to be interesting, but it would be effective only if the United States were to give priority to the nuclear issue in its relations with Pakistan.

But the Pakistani program continued, seemingly oblivious to American carrots and sticks. In 1982, the Reagan administration told Zia that efforts to use a small indigenously developed reprocessing plant might jeopardize aid, but apparently not until a letter from Reagan to Zia in September 1984 did the administration say that enrichment of uranium to weapons-grade levels might also jeopardize the package.

In July, the administration again warned the visiting Pakistani prime minister that acquiring nuclear weapons would result in the end of U.S. economic and military assistance. However, this week's news of intelligence reports that Pakistan has pursued trigger-ing tests and enriched uranium to weapons levels suggests that Pakistan thinks the administration is bluffing. (The Pakistanis have denied they are seeking to produce nuclear weapons.)

The big danger, for now, is that India will step up its own nuclear program, which has been relatively restrained in recent years, or try to stop the Pakistani program before it goes any further. In 1984, there were rumors of a possible preemptive strike by India against the Kahuta plant, and in 1985, prime minister Rajiv Gandhi warned that Pakistan's progress might force India to reconsider its decision not to develop a nuclear arsenal. The United States sought to reassure Gandhi that our diplomatic efforts would keep Pakistan below the weapons threshold. The recent news is likely to make India call into question our promises.

The United States also has told the Soviet Union that we are dealing effectively with the situation in Pakistan. When the Soviets warned Zia last June that they would not tolerate a Pakistani nuclear capability, the United States replied with a public warning: "hands off Pakistan."

Despite this public posture, private diplomacy between the superpowers has been relatively effective on the proliferation issue. President Reagan has come a long way since his 1980 campaign comment that proliferation is "none of our business," and the Soviets continued regular talks in this area even after breaking off other arms control negotiations after the INF deployment in 1983. The talks have involved sharing information regarding sensitive cases. If the U.S. assurances regarding Pakistan prove hollow, we may find it harder to get Soviet cooperation on issues such as the Libyan and Cuban nuclear programs.

What can be done?

The most important step would be for the administration to raise the priority it gives to the nuclear issue in the U.S.-Pakistan relationship. We must convince Pakistan that we are not bluffing, and that their security interests will be better served by a continuing U.S. relationship rather than by adding a weak and vulnerable nuclear capability in a condition of diplomatic isolation.

Pakistan's concern about its status relative to that of India can be met without a nuclear explosion. A nuclear arms race on the subcontinent will make both countries more insecure. If both refrain from testing and developing nuclear arsenals, there will be less danger of preemptive strikes and more time for diplomacy to work. The United States should warn both countries that small, vulnerable nuclear forces will actually reduce their security.

Increasing the priority we give the nuclear issue may damage our other interests in Pakistan, such as intelligence gathering and sustaining the resistance in Afghanistan. Why should we care enough to pay such costs?

The answer is that reducing the risk of nuclear war is the most important priority for American foreign policy. It is futile for the leaders of the superpowers to talk about reducing reliance on nuclear weapons if the current non-proliferation regime is allowed to erode.

Life in a nuclear-armed crowd in which many of the new entrants lack the political and technical conditions for stable deterrence will be very costly to all.

(Joseph S. Nye Jr. is a professor of government at Harvard University and author of "Nuclear Ethics." From 1977 to 1979 he was a deputy undersecretary of state and chaired the National Security Council ad hoc committee on non-proliferation.)

Midterm Polls Show All Still To Fight For In 1988

WASHINGTON — The American voters have sent both parties a warning notice that they are ready for sweeping change as Ronald Reagan's presidency approaches its end.

Prospective 1988 candidates and their advisers looked at the results of last week's midterm election as a signal that the struggle to succeed Reagan will take place in the most open, uncertain and competitive political environment any of them have ever faced.

That assessment reflected the shock and surprise most politicians felt a day after voters stripped Republicans of eight seats and control of the Senate, while ousting the Democrats from eight governorships and ending their domination of state government — an overall result that suggested no part of the country is off-limits to either party.

The impact of the topsy-turvy electoral tallies was registered by the two men who managed the last presidential campaigns. "What we've learned," said Edward J. Rollins, who ran Reagan's 1984 drive, "is that we have a two-party system as closely balanced as any time in recent history, and whoever puts up the best candidate and effort and message can win."

Robert G. Beckel, manager of Walter F. Mondale's campaign, said he agreed that "ticket-splitting and tough two-party competition are embedded everywhere, including now the South. There's nothing we (Democrats) can't go after, and almost nothing they can't take from us."

Key figures in the political community were also predicting:

- A period of intense partisanship, as the Reagan White House girds for battle with a Congress now completely under control of the Democrats, and those Democrats seek ways to exploit on a national level some of the economic, environmental, budget and defense issues they used effectively in their states and districts last week.
- A long and uncertain struggle for the presidential nominations in both parties, with a handful of tested veterans vying against ambitious newcomers who gained confidence and, in some cases, improved credentials by their roles in the midterm campaign.
- And a final political challenge for Reagan, whose marathon campaigning failed to save the Senate for the GOP but left most Democrats still wary that he will fight like a lion to keep the White House from their hands.

The surprising scale of the Democratic Senate gains made it far less likely that Republicans can retake that body in two years, when 19 Democrats and 14 Republicans face the voters. With the House securely in Democratic hands at least until the reapportionment that will follow the 1990 census, that means the presidency becomes more of a prize than usual.

Preliminary assessments were that the ideological balance within the two parties had not changed dramatically — despite the election of 12 new Republican and nine new Democratic governors and 13 newcomers entering the Senate, 11 of them Democrats.

It was the venues in which they won that underlined so dramatically that there are few "safe harbors" in American politics today: Republicans winning governorships for the first time in Alabama and the second time ever in Florida, Texas and South Carolina; Democrats capturing Senate seats in the two Dakotas and Nevada, where Reagan's margins obliterated the Democratic contenders in 1980 and 1984; a black Democrat winning for the first time in the Mississippi Delta; and a white Republican winning for the first time (against a black) in the Cajun country of neighboring Louisiana.

Ticket-splitting ran riot. In Maine, a Republican House member and a Democratic governor swapped jobs. In Alabama and Florida, voters gave the Democratic governorships to Republicans and the Republican Senate seats to the Democrats.

Nor did the voters' concerted demonstration of disregard for party labels stop there. In South Carolina, Republicans assembled a "dream team" of their two strongest House members, Reps. Carroll Campbell and Thomas Hartnett, for governor and lieutenant governor, and ran them as a ticket. What party leaders had joined together, the voters put asunder, electing Campbell and rejecting Hartnett. The same split between the top two jobs occurred in California, Texas, Oklahoma, Alabama, Iowa and Rhode Island.

Democrats gained about 150 additional seats in the state legislatures, even as they suffered a net loss of eight governorships. As 1990 approaches, control of legislatures becomes a key to the redrawing of congressional and legislative district lines and the Democrats now control both houses in 28 states, the Republicans in only nine.

Sorting through these contradictory signals was a challenge even to seasoned pros, but most focused on the shift of Senate control as the most important short-term alteration in the political environment. Tom Griscom, executive director of the National Republican Senatorial Committee, still licking his wounds, observed that "going into 1988, there will be a clear realization that the White House is Republican and Congress is Democratic. That will allow issues of national scope to develop, which we didn't have in 1986."

Many others in both parties agreed that the shift of Senate control preceding an election without an incumbent president on the ballot makes it likely that 1988 will be a "big-issue" contest, one that will set a new agenda for government.

Some said they welcomed it. Retiring Sen. Gary Hart, D-Colo., leading in the early polls for the Democratic presidential nomination, said, "The message for our party is 'Have a message.' We have a greater burden not just to oppose Ronald Reagan but to put forward concrete proposals of our own."

Rep. Richard Gephardt, D-Mo., chairman of the House Democratic caucus and one of several likely dark-horse challengers for the party's presidential nomination, said that such initiatives would be offered on education, trade and agriculture issues early in the 100th Congress. Even if they run into veto threats from Reagan, "they will be useful because they will allow us to show people out on the floor of the House and Senate, where they can see us, that we have ideas we are ready to implement," he said.

Democrats exploited their enhanced majorities in Congress to follow just such a strategy in the period immediately preceding their takeover of the White House in 1960 and again in 1976. But Republicans said it could well backfire if attempted against Reagan.

The president told administration aides last week that he would press on with his own agenda, and his pollster, Richard B. Wirthlin, said that if Democrats attempt to thwart Reagan and move policy in a different direction, "they run the risk of becoming too strident or obstructionist to a very popular president."

Nor was he alone. Greg Schneiders, a Democratic political consultant and former Jimmy Carter aide, said the Senate victories were "idiosyncratic," resulting from the large number of shaky freshmen Republicans who came up in one election. Referring to Reagan's past control of the policy agenda, Schneiders said, "If we think what happened between 1980 and 1986 was an aberration, and this is a restoration of our hegemony, it would be a tremendous mistake."

Democrats hardly had time to savor their Senate victories before they began to display their customary ideological differences. The winners in states such as North and South Dakota, Maryland, North Carolina, Georgia and Washington were either the most liberal members of their House delegations, self-described populists or retreads from the 1960s. Yet many of them conspicuously blunted their past views and were selective in their challenges to the prevailing sentiments in their states.

Sen. Joseph Biden, D-Del., a presidential hopeful who campaigned in about 25 states, said the candidates he saw during his travels did "a lot of trimming of traditional liberal sails." He warned that if the liberals in his party attempt to shape a legislative program on the assumption "that all you have to do is be for peace, love, brotherhood, the poor and arms control at any price, they're going to get their ears pinned back. People are looking for balance in the ideological sense as well as the political sense."

But Sen. Edward Kennedy, D-Mass., who is certain to be a more visible figure in the restored Democratic Senate, said he saw "the historical Democratic alliance" revived by the election returns and argued that there was a mandate from "ethnic households, minorities, the elderly and the poor" to tackle "economic challenges head-on."

On the Democratic side, New York Gov. Mario Cuomo, D, glossed his presidential credentials with an expected landslide win and took out a campaign help-wanted ad — in the form of a New York Times interview in which he and his son, Andrew, said they would welcome outside assistance if he bids for the White House next year.

Among Republicans, the consensus was that Vice President Bush's front-runner position was not damaged by last week's results and may have been marginally enhanced by the election of several new governors known to be friendly or politically indebted to him. Rep. Jack Kemp, R-N.Y., won comfortably, despite Cuomo's cont-tails and a Washington-inspired Democratic effort to hold down his margin, and is now clear to concentrate on his expected bid.

But most conversation on the Republican hopefuls centered on the change of status — and perhaps strategy — Sen. Robert Dole, R-Kan., faces with his demotion from majority leader to minority leader. Several Republicans said the loss of the Senate majority would strip Dole of some of the news media attention and perhaps the financial backing that helped move him up in the polls during the past year. Dole said he would not hesitate to leave the leadership, or even the Senate, "if I become a serious candidate." But he made it clear that would not happen for months, if ever.

By David S. Broder

IN ENGLAND in 1979 on business, I worked like the devil in the mornings so as to leave my afternoons free for sex. First, I would rush down to the newsdealer's for the latest on the aged aristocrat who, it was charged, was in the habit of being photographed wearing nothing but aristocratic robes around his shoulders and naked girls across his knees. Then I would dash to the storied Old Bailey court for the trial of Liberal Party leader Jeremy Thorpe, accused of conspiring to murder a male model — an alleged plot that also involved the shooting of a Great Dane. Thorpe, exonerated, was spared jail, but not ridicule. In the next election, Auberon Waugh opposed him with the slogan, "A Better Deal For Your Dog."

Sitting in the Old Bailey, my tabloids besides me, I felt almost British. I had developed a taste for that most English of all spectator sports, the sex scandal, in which the poor watch the rich make asses of themselves. After a thousand years of the aristocracy plundering the poor and mispronouncing their language, the tables have been turned. For a working class Brit, nothing is as much fun as watching his betters exit on the big banana peel of sex.

Now it is Jeffrey Archer who has exited in this manner — his summons coming in the usual way: "TORY BOSS PAYS OFF VICE GIRL," screamed The News of the World to no less than 4.5 million subscribers. Archer, famous author and deputy chairman of the Conservative Party, was reported to have offered a woman — Monica Coghlan by name, prostitute by trade — $2,850 to leave the country. His intermediary, in a remark delivered to Coghlan but captured by a hidden News of the World tape recorder, said Archer was "in a spot of a bother" — and then handed over the money. Archer denied all, but promptly resigned his party post, bringing a swift conclusion to the scandal. *Not since Joe Louis knocked out Max Schmeling in the first round have so many people felt so cheated.*

A look at just two months' worth of front-page headlines in either the weekly News of the World or the daily Sun (circulation 4.1 million) shows that the British stiff upper lip is usually puckered



From left (top): Jeffrey Archer, Christine Keeler, Mandy Rice-Davies, Margaret Thatcher: (bottom) King Edward VII and Queen Alexandra, John Profumo.

The British Obsession With Sex

By Richard Cohen

in a kiss: "Six Palace Servants in AIDS Danger;" "Ice Star In Love Secret;" "It's Hot Lips Samantha;" "Wanted Man's Night with Birds;" "Princess and the Topless Beauty;" "Princess and My Husband," and "My Passion for Mandy," a 50-year-old rock musician's account of his longing. Mandy, incidentally, was all of 13.

Headlines, though, are mere words. It is the pictures that can leave you speechless. Those in the papers (very often page 3) are usually of topless women who can barely be contained in the tabloid format. The Sun of Oct. 28 has one of Gail McKenna, 17, a "Liverpool beauty;" the same day's Daily Mirror featured Marie Sharrocks, 20, while the more staid Daily Mail had no nude on page 3, but did have a riveting story back in the paper reporting that "a married Scotland Yard detective had an illicit love affair with a woman who, unknown to him, was providing a safe house for an IRA terror squad." Another tabloid, The Mail, had neither pictures nor steamy stories. Quite the contrary, it carried an article denying that the Archbishop of Canterbury's marriage was in trouble.

By actual count (mine), Archer's was the 6,654th sex scandal to rock Britain since the Norman French introduced recreational sex into England in 1066. It has not been quite three years since yet another leading Tory (no, not George Will) was forced to quit Margaret Thatcher's government when it was revealed that he was having an affair with his secretary. As is the custom, Thatcher stood by her man, Cecil Parkinson, until it became apparent that (1) he had lied to her and (2) the secretary was pregnant. For Thatcher, reportedly so strait-laced she had hesitated to marry her husband, Dennis, because he had been divorced, the Archer affair must have seemed — to quote Yogi Berra — like deja vu all over again. Four of her married Conservative legislators had already admitted to affairs. Winston Churchill, grandson of the prime minister, confessed to one; Nicholas Fairborne to another; Nigel Lawson divorced his wife to marry a House of Commons librarian, and Geoffrey Dickens, having admitted to two different affairs, announced he was leaving his wife but, after two weeks, returned home.

As far as Americans are concerned, England's best-known sex scandal was the Profumo Affair, named after John Profumo, war minister in Harold MacMillan's Conservative government. The names of the women involved — Mandy Rice-Davies, Christine Keeler — still are familiar to Americans with either a long memory or a dirty mind. Profumo himself was accused of consorting with call girls at the same time that one of them, Keeler, was accused of consorting with the Soviet military attache, the cinematically-named Vladimir Ivanoff. This was the best of all sex scandals, involving not only call girls and wild parties but national security as well. In hockey, this is known as the hat trick.

Before Parkinson and after Profumo came the Lambton scandal. Lord Anthony Lambton was minister for the air force under Conservative Prime Minister Edward Heath. He resigned after being photographed in bed with a call girl and admitting to smoking marijuana — a clear security risk, that. Heath no sooner had retired his ax when he had to use it again, this time on Lord George Jellicoe, party leader in the House of Lords. He admitted to visiting callgirls.

Aficionados of British sex scandals will by now have deduced a pattern — Profumo in 1963, Lambton in '73, Parkinson in '83. Some British tabloids wondered if the Tories had "10-year sex cycles," but there is ample evidence to suggest that the cycle is more like daily. Readers of the British papers or the satirical journal Private Eye can literally rattle off dozens more scandals, and each one has a personal favorite. For one, it is the sad tale of the politician who was found naked while attending a European disarmament conference. He had been tethered to a tree with a studded dog collar. Another recommends the story of a nobleman who sued his butler for embezzlement even though he knew that his habit of spending money on women would be revealed. "Yes, I have been generous," the nobleman acknowledged in court. He then categorized the recipients of his largesse: "Some old ladies, some young ladies — admittedly mostly young ladies." The butler was convicted.

What is it with the Brits and sex? There are as many answers as there are scandals. Some think that the culprit is the weather — cold and damp, most of the year, cool and damp the rest with, until recently, very little central heating. Others blame the rigorous and spartan "public" schools, private boarding academies where the upper class is, in effect, quarantined until about the age of 18. From then on, this theory goes, they devote a lifetime to doing what they were forbidden from doing in school. Still others simply blame British women, especially the ladies of the upper class whose alleged interest in matters sexual can best be summed up by a (possibly apocryphal) remark attributed to Queen Mary, wife of George V: "I just close my eyes and think of England."

There seems to be yet another reason why Britain routinely is afflicted with sex scandals while America, for instance, is not. That reason is class.

Of course, Britain is not unique in this regard. But where Britain is unique is that, say unlike Italy or France, the lower and, especially, the middleclasses are prim to the point of pain. Puritanism, after all, was a British invention, as were Methodism and some fundamentalist Christian denominations. Due to the tragic failure of socialism, the lower classes cannot afford either prostitutes or mistresses and the stodgy middle class will not have them. As for the upper class, its ethic can probably best be summed up by the remark of Mrs. Patrick Campbell, an actress and friend of George Bernard Shaw: "It doesn't matter what you do in the bedroom as long as you don't do it in the street and frighten the horses."

America is really too new a nation to have those kinds of class differences and, anyway, the truly rich in this country have traditionally abjured politics. (The two Roosevelts were an exception.) By and large, the United States draws its political — although not necessarily its governmental — elite from the middle and upper-middle classes. After Franklin Roosevelt, every president save John F. Kennedy was born in modest circumstances and Kennedy happens to be the one whose life style most closely approximated the British upper classes. Another whose life did was Nelson Rockefeller, who departed this earth, as we all know, *in flagrante inconveniento.* At any rate, he never made it to the presidency.

The British upper classes take their cue from royalty who, at least up to King Edward VII, did not feel the slightest inconvienced by marriage. Both as Prince of Wales and later as monarch, Edward had many mistresses. Among them were Lily Langtry, Sarah Bernhardt and Jennie Jerome, the mother of Winston Churchill. Edward made no secret of his amours, hiding them neither from his wife nor from the press. Queen Alexandra, Edward's wife, even had one of them, the justly-famous Alice Keppel, to both Marlborough House and Sandringham. She came, of course, with her husband.

One of Edward's friends, Sir Charles Dilke, figured in the most glorious scandal of his day. Touted as a certain prime minister by none other than Benjamin Disraeli, Dilke saw his career end when, in 1885, Virginia Crawford, the 22-year-old wife of a Scottish lawyer, confessed to a three-year affair with him. Named in the divorce suit, Dilke was exonerated but foolishly had the case re-opened to further clear his name. (A certain W.T. Snead of the Pall Mall Gazette was writing vicious stories about him.) At that trial, Dilke once again rebutted Mrs. Crawford's allegation — but confessed to having an affair with her mother.

Edward stuck by his friend, setting his version of a moral example, although when later he became king, the crown did weigh heavily on his head. At a reception, he was forced to snub a former mistress, the French actress Rejane, but later reportedly sent her a diamond clip and a note: "With apologies from the King of England who is no longer the Prince of Wales."

After Edward, the royal family cleaned up its act. It was becoming a popular institution, ultimately beholden to the masses for both its continued existence and, through Parliament, for its funds. The great transition figure was probably the next Edward, who for some reason thought he should be able to combine love and marriage. He abdicated his throne "for the woman I love," prompting the aging Mrs. Keppel to say: "Things were done better in my day."

Sadly, there is scant empirical evidence to prove that, when it comes to sex, the British of any class outclass anyone else. There is plenty of evidence to prove, though, that their newspapers — especially the tabloids — have no class at all. What American newspapers will not print, the British tabloid not only do, but will stoop to paying for it. Just as England confuses private and public schools, its press confuses private and public issues, providing — via the aristocracy — moral lessons for the prim middle class, entertainment for the working class and grist for columnists pondering the meaning of it all.

Back in the late 1940s, one of us, George Orwell, had it figured out. In a magazine column devoted to murders and to the motive for most of them — sex — he said the perfect killing should involve "a little man of the professional class." . . . He should be . . . chairman of the local Conservative Party branch . . . and a strong Temperance advocate who should go astray through cherishing a guilty passion for his secretary or the wife of a rival professional man . . . As for how the news of such a sex-drenched murder should reach the eyes of the average bloke, Orwell had that figured out, too: "It is Sunday afternoon. . . The wife is already asleep in the armchair, and the children have been sent out for a nice long walk. You put your feet up on the sofa, settle you spectacles on your nose and open the News of the World."

The other Sunday, let us hope, the children were sent out for a walk.

Sights for sore eyes on British Rail

By Geoffrey Taylor

IT IS NOT clear whether British Rail paid adequate regard to the mental health of passengers before starting to electrify the line from London to the North-East and Edinburgh. If not, then the medical services will be placed under excessive strain.

Until now the southbound journey has gently unfolded a changing landscape and induced that sense of tranquility to which British Rail says it aspires. The meadows outside in their immemorial mists, the woodland on the horizon, perhaps a scudding cloud — quite a rustic idyll, and [illegible] to the mind of the hard-pressed executive speeding between important engagements in the two capitals.

In the promotional literature for business diaries much emphasis is laid on the pressure of these engagements. "Tuesday 2000, dinner Roderick McTavish Associates, Caledonian Hotel. Wednesday, dep. Edinburgh 0735. 1245 Mansion House lunch. 1645, fly to Montreal." Even for the rest of us a modest pleasure has been to dissect a kipper while speeding at 125 mph through the Vale of York. All that is about to become a memory.

The purpose of electrification is well known. It is to upgrade the system and stimulate the economy. If 33,000 holes are filled with 200,000 tons of concrete to support masts carrying 2,800 miles of wiring, with 14 feeder stations to relay the power, somebody is going to benefit. That is undoubtedly true, but the beneficiary will not be the passenger.

I have been observing this project since it was authorised in the summer of 1984. Work began two days later. In a northerly direction the posts have almost reached Newark, and they are advancing steadily south from Leeds, and I believe, York and Newcastle. A few simple calculations have shown what the impact is likely to be on a passenger's central nervous system.

If the posts are located every 50 yards, and the train is travelling, as intended at 125 mph, then the image of a post strikes the retina of the eye every four-fifths of a second. This message is conveyed by the well-known activation of neurons, which can be looked up in any textbook, to the brain. The brain then analyses the sense impressions it has received and allocates a space to them where they will add to the individual's understanding of the surrounding world.

Now any neuro-psychologist will say that the damage to the cerebral cortex from such an influx of repetitive but essentially meaningless information can only increase the danger of psychotic disorder in later life. Apart from that it spoils the view. It also disorganises the taste buds. The kipper on the plate, even the bacon sandwich from the buffet, is no longer the focus of sensual impressions. The age-old grazing of the cattle outside is interrupted 73 times a minute by a vertical streak across the eye at an angle of some 65 degrees subtended — are you there? — from the centre of the pupil.

No executive on his way to a killing from the Big Bang can cope with such a dizzy input of extraneous information, and it is notable that in its advertising British Rail does not pretend he can. From the spacious windows depicted in the ads there is not a pole to be seen.

One must guard, however, against too hasty a judgment. Many of British Rail's activities are not intended to be understood by the passenger. For example, one frequently sees wagons in a siding labelled "not in common use," and only a railwayman will understand what that means.

The layman will assume that the wagon is used only rarely and after due consideration. "It looks like we'll have to use E-14307 [illegible] Crumbs. E-14307? Are you sure, Steve?" "Needs must when the devil drives. Get Norman to shunt her on to the down slow." In fact the explanation would probably turn out to be much less ceremonious, though it is hard to imagine what it might be.

A similar perplexity arises with the long wagons marked "not to be loose shunted." It is not easy to imagine what loose shunting entails or why it is carried out. I used to be aware of it in the middle of the night when I lived near a goods yard, but assumed it was some kind of in-service training for new staff. The only time I experienced shunting practice at first hand was on arriving at Carlisle in a sleeper in the small hours. My coach had to be separated from the rest of the train, but I was too dozy to take note of the full implications of all the buffer clanging that was going on outside.

An example of the professionalism which informs BR's operations at every level, and which gives hope that the Edinburgh operation has after all been fully thought out, is to be found in the signalling system. I doubt whether an outsider could begin to penetrate it but BR has a code of bells relayed to signal boxes which takes care of every contingency. For instance bells ringing 6-2 mean "train an unusually long time in section," 5-3 means "last train signalled was incorrectly described" and 2-5-5 means "train running away in wrong direction."

Rule K-3 requires that if a train is stopped by a red signal the guard should [illegible] box and ask the signalman if anything is amiss. Some signal posts incorporate either a telephone or a plunger which the guard can press to achieve the same effect without walking through the drizzle.

Now if a train stops at a red signal and the guard neither walks the track nor presses a plunger, that will invariably be because there is a diamond-shaped plate attached to the signal post which signifies what is called a K-3 exemption. It is probably a busy crossing, the signalman is fully aware of the situation, and there is no need for immediate action. Before long, you will notice, the signal will change to green or yellow and the train will proceed.

Not many people know about the K-3 exemption, but as it is the sort of thing one learns as one goes through life, I thought it worth passing on.

These examples show that in most respects much thought has been put into railway practice. But is that true of electrification? I doubt it. Anyone planning to travel to or from King's Cross is surely advised to consult a reputable oculist or ophthalmologist. One has to stress reputable these days because since deregulation all sorts of cowboys have been muscling in on the game.

The wine society

By James Erlichman

DEVOTEES of nostalgia, trivia, and voyeurism receive triple gratification from a survey into the British way of life. To celebrate its 40th year of polling people's habits, the Market Research Society unearthed what we all ate, drank and wore in bed in 1946, and then asked the [illegible] today.

Ration-starved Britain's favourite meal was tomato soup followed by Dover sole, roast chicken, and trifle.

Restaurant-chain thinking rules today. Prawn cocktail replaces the sole, steak and chips the chicken, and trifle has been relegated by Black Forest gateau.

Only 4 per cent said they drank wine with their meals in 1946. Today 61 per cent prefer wine.

Only 23 pollsters turned up at the society's inaugural meeting in 1946. Today the industry has 5,500 practitioners who charge fees of more than £200 million.

Women who agreed to be polled in 1946 revealed that they only owned one blouse and did 16.6 hours of housework a week. But they demurely failed to disclose anything about their sexual habits.

Today's women own 21 blouses, do half as much housework and reveal all about their sex lives. They make love mid-week for only 30 minutes, but prefer 40-minute bouts at the weekend, the survey said.

The society commissioned 18 separate surveys to produce its report. More sober readers will discover that fears of serious economic recession loom larger now (52 per cent of respondents) than it did in Mr Attlee's day (32 per cent).

Taxing time for the arts

Donald Wintersgill on an EEC threat

BRITAIN's predominant position in the world art market will be destroyed by a directive from Brussels unless the British Government comes to the rescue. The market is poised to move to New York.

The Brussels bureaucrats seek to harmonise Value Added Tax throughout the EEC, and part of the harmonisation would be the imposition of VAT on imports of art and antiques.

But London has built up its predominance in the art markets since the 1950s by allowing free entry and almost free exit. It has been this freedom which brought London's predominance: formerly the position was held by Paris.

People on the Continent, or in Latin America, or Australia, or anywhere else in the Western world who have valuable objects to sell almost always think of London as the place. The exceptions are few — Impressionists and contemporary American works of art do well in New York, but they are usually owned by Americans and are likely to be bought by Americans.

Imposition of VAT on imports for sale in London will drive the business away. Goods brought here would have to pay 15 per cent of their value on landing. The tax would be returned if the goods were re-exported; but no importer is going to lend 15 per cent of the value of a £1 million painting to the British Government for several months.

Striking examples of London's position will be seen in December at the two big auction houses. Christie's are to sell a great work by Constable — a view of Flatford Mill, worth perhaps £1 million. Sotheby's are to sell an early portrait of a young woman by Rembrandt and two portraits by Franz Hals, worth perhaps £5.8 million in all. The four paintings have been sent for sale from the United States.

The threat to London has been around for 11 years. Surprisingly, the arts lobby has not been very visible over the issue. Most of the London trade's protests were aimed at the bureaucrats in Brussels — an exercise like swimming in a tub of marshmallow. But the issue is now going to the political level, the only level at which something can be done.

The total value of the British art market is perhaps £800 million to £900 million a year. This is not from the big auctioneers alone but also from the other auctioneers; the innumerable dealers who cluster around Bond Street, Duke Street, and St James's, in London; the antique shops that are a part of every town and village; the hotels, restaurants, and airlines that service foreign buyers; and the packers and shippers and insurance people and restorers and so forth.

No other city can match the business and the expertise, not even New York, for New York does not have the range of dealers.

At the same time, Sotheby's, Christie's, and Phillips have spread themselves around the world. They have representatives in places as far apart as Buenos Aires, Stockholm, Tokyo, and Cape Town, and salerooms in New York. They hold auctions in Hong Kong, Geneva, and elsewhere. Much of the business generated in these places ends up in London.

Mr Paul Whitfield, of Christie's, recently told a seminar in London held by the European Movement: "The London auctioneers have set standards for the world and dominated world markets. In an age when we have let go shipbuilding, aircraft, and motor cars, we do have at least one industry which is an undisputed world leader."

He said that the free movement of goods in and out "is the elixir of the market, Freia's golden apples which keep the bloom on the cheeks of the gods. And these golden apples are under threat, from a city more associated with sprouts than any other fruit: namely Brussels."

The market here is also distinguished by being more or less above board. That is not the case on the Continent. Imposition of VAT on imports is likely to drive business underground, to avoid VAT.

A leading London dealer, who wants to be anonymous, says: "Continental dealers from time to time ask for invoices that are for a lower figure than the real one. The aim is to get the goods through customs on the Continent at a low figure of VAT.

"Or Continental dealers ask for the goods to be shipped to strange companies in Switzerland or in countries that are tax havens.

"Works of art and antiques are not all that hard to get through customs under false descriptions; nor are they hard to smuggle if the rewards are big enough. If VAT on imports is brought in, the country will gain in tax revenue but lose a lot more in terms of cash and prestige.

"The best thing would be for the rest of the European Community to adopt the British system. It's no use applying EEC rules to a market as sensitive and unique as the market in antiques and works of art."

Britain is however not guiltless. The rules of the Customs and Excise say that antiques can be brought in — at the moment — without paying tax. But antiques are defined as being objects that are 100 years old or more. Many collectable objects are less than 100 years old — so they cannot come in freely. That is a loss to Britain as the centre of the world market.

Examples are the rich toys made by Fabergé, court jeweller to the last of the Tsars; the glass of Lalique and Tiffany; the glorious French bookbindings of this century; even rock 'n' roll guitars and memorabilia of the Beatles.

This means that the centre of the market for Fabergé is Geneva; for bookbindings New York and Geneva; and for Art Deco objects the market is scattered. London is missing out. Mr Whitfield says it is time for the rules to catch up with reality, or otherwise London will miss the chance of business in ever-expanding areas of buying and selling.

Another lunacy from Brussels is threatening the trade here. Almost all ordinary goods attract VAT when they are sold — from manufacturer to wholesaler to retailer to consumer. The art and antiques business has a special scheme, however. VAT is charged only on the seller's mark-up, the difference between the buying price and the selling price.

Brussels wants VAT to be charged on the full amount whenever a work of art or an antique changes hands. The trade is unusual because an object tends to pass through many hands before it goes to a collector or museum.

If Brussels has its way, the results will be crazy. The tax on an object sold to a collector might ultimately be greater than the value of the object. Owners will have to keep their invoices for ever, so that when an object is sold again the VAT can be recovered. Here is another potential feast for the forger of invoices.

Some British dealers do provide Continental buyers with two invoices, showing the true figure and a much lower false figure. Other British dealers provide only a true invoice but hand over a blank sheet of headed notepaper, so that the Continental buyer can produce his own forgery.

Memories out of the abyss

CINEMA by Derek Malcolm

THE Washington Post called *Shoah* "the film event of the century"; the Chicago Tribune wrote about it as "the greatest use of film in motion picture history." And even allowing for the hyperbole of American reviewers, the presentation of Claude Lanzmann's film about the Holocaust is clearly an event of some importance and risk.

Shoah is nine and a half hours long and will be shown in two parts. It runs in London, with a Christmas break, until January 8. What it does, without the use of archive footage or still photographs, is to ask its many witnesses — interviewed by Lanzmann over a period of a decade — to unblock their memories of what actually happened at Chelmno, Treblinka, Auschwitz-Birkenau and in the Warsaw ghetto.

The memories are from survivors, onlookers and the minor functionaries of genocide, who have been traced to Poland, Germany, Switzerland, Greece, Israel and the United States. And as we look at their faces and hear their often stumbling and hesitant words, Lanzmann's methods and purposes become clear. Refusing obvious emotion, he wants us to hear for ourselves the minutiae of what happened and how it happened rather than why.

It is extraordinarily difficult to explain in words quite how this obstinate, obsessive French filmmaker can hold the attention for anything like this timespan. Perhaps it is because there is really no way one can duck out of the unfolding story once it has begun.

Yet it has to be said that Shoah is much easier to sit through than one had expected, because of the frequently elegiac and sometimes poetic construction of its filmmaking, the simplicity and directness of which hides considerable artifice. Lanzmann slowly and painstakingly forces one to come to terms with the often banal detail — yes, this is what happened, this is what I saw, this is what I did, this is what I felt about it.

There is nothing to see that anyone need flinch from (the certificate is PG), but Shoah's strength lies partly in precisely that refusal to rub our noses in visual horrors. Lanzmann simply questions and questions and questions. That way Shoah is totally compelling viewing and, very often, it is within its tiniest details that its major truths lie.

It is brave of the Curzon, of all fashionable art-houses, to mount the film for two months, come what may. There is unlikely to be much profit in it. But someone had to do it, and one hopes the audacity is justified. Lanzmann's has been already. Just with this one film, his place in film history is secure.

Federico Fellini's *Ginger And Fred* is a blatant but not always buoyant attempt to show what the maestro thinks about the television era.

In it, he documents with unconcealed glee the enormous self-importance of Italian television's executives, the flatulent lack of importance of what is often on display and the way those who actually appear on the screen are frequently forced into a twisted approximation of themselves. This is a bird's-eye view of the whole operation that is both a parody and very near reality.

So far, so good. But his story of two aged hoofers (Marcello Mastroianni and Giulietta Masina), tumbled out of obscurity to take part in a variety telethon that's bound to do them no good whatsoever, takes a long time to get going and survives its two hours perilously. It's also one of the least graceful films he's ever made.

The pleasure, as usual in lesser Fellini, lies in the set-pieces, like the hoofers' final, accident-festooned dance before the cameras, and the studio chaos through which dwarfs, Woody Allen lookalikes, levitating monks and a whole assemblage of attention-seeking nonentities jostle for a place in the sun.

Strangely, neither of the two principals, bickering and anxiety-ridden, are the kind of tragi-comic creations of showbiz that they might have been, largely because the script veers so often between the cynical and the sentimental that neither can establish and hold an effective mood. Admirable performers as they are, it is only in the last sequences that they seem to come properly alive.

Then, at last, Fellini's sense of occasion comes flooding back. The two become real flesh and blood for the first time — brave, pathetic creatures whose affection for each other after so many years apart makes the whole ridiculous circus look as ungenuine as it is. Ginger And Fred is, until then, essentially a bitter film, blowing raspberries at a medium more powerful now than the cinema but failing to convince us that the cinema deserves a very much better fate.

States of peril

Michael Billington on a new Arthur Miller play

OUR major theatres don't go in much for thematic programming. But the value of it is revealed at The Pit where Arthur Miller's The Archbishop's Ceiling joins Richard Nelson's *Principia Scriptoriae* in the repertoire: both highly intelligent plays about the fate of the writer under oppressive regimes. Miller's play tends to take you round the track twice over but what it gives you is the sense of a major writer wrestling with the problem of how one preserves personal integrity in a corrupt world.

More than when I saw it at Bristol Old Vic last year, it now seems to be as much about Western democracies as Eastern bloc countries. The actual setting is a baroque palace, once an Archbishop's residence, in a European capital (Prague or Budapest, say); and the dramatic motor is whether Sigmund, a dissident genius whose latest novel has been impounded by the authorities, should stay and fight the state from within or become a Westernised exile.

Marcus, a state-sanctioned colleague, Adrian who is an interloping American and Maya, an actress-writer who has slept with all three men, urge Sigmund to defect; he himself realises that he can only write in a spirit of combative opposition to the current regime. But what gives the debate its tension is the fear that the ornate ceiling is bugged and that the cherubim that once symbolised God's power now conceal the state's.

It is important to remember that Miller wrote the play in the post-Watergate America of 1977. What he is saying, above all, is that the threat of surveillance and growth of state-power erodes morality by turning everyone into performers. He is not directly comparing America and Eastern Europe (though Chris Bigsby reminds us in the Methuen edition that Washington's Mayflower hotel was found in 1983 to have 28 hidden microphones). But Miller is using drama as an early-warning system and pointing out what happens when the state has the capacity to eavesdrop on all our lives: that friendship is tinged with suspicion, that argument becomes unreal and that we all become actors in a play someone else has written.

Miller's passionate moral concern overcomes the play's dramatic flaws. Specifically he makes Adrian, the American novelist who has returned to the Eastern bloc to cure his own writer's block, too aggressively naive. He also tends, in the second act, to reiterate arguments rather than develop them. But Miller's strength is that he never ceases to engage with the issues of our time and that he has the ability to encapsulate a mood in a phrase: as, for instance, when the displaced American says of his post-Korean, pre-Vietnam generation, "History came at us like a rumour. We were never really there."

The practical difficulty in staging the play is that the actors have to veer between self-conscious awareness of the bugging and a transported forgetfulness. But Nick Hamm's production gets the balance right and gains enormously from the intimacy of The Pit where, in Fotini Dimou's design, bulging-cheeked plaster cherubs hover sinisterly over our heads.

The cast also, for the most part, solve the problems Miller has set them. Jane Lapotaire lends Maya a vehement, accusatory quality that make the character much more than the writer's moll I dubbed her in Bristol. David de Keyser is totally accurate, and instantly recognisable, as the kind of suave, state-approved Communist writer who turns up at international conferences. And Roger Allam makes sense of the unquiet American for whom all Eastern bloc life is good copy.

But John Shrapnel as Sigmund signals tortured Slav genius by a two-day-old stubble, never taking off his overcoat and pouring whisky over his head. Maybe that's how dissident geniuses behave: I just feel it would be dramatically more interesting if the man concealed his egotism.

But, in the end, Miller's tale works because he himself is speaking as the conscience of our times and warning us that the problem of impersonation and of our emotions having no connection with events is most visible in Soviet satellites but is dangerously prevalent everywhere.

Berlioz is back

RECORDS by Edward Greenfield

BERLIOZ: Les Troyens. Davis/ROH Chorus and Orchestra/Vickers/Veasey/Lindholm/Soyer. Philips 416 432-2 (4 CDs).
BERLIOZ: La damnation de Faust. Davis/LSO/Veasey/Gedda/Bastin. Philips 416 395-2 (2 CDs). Philips.
BERLIOZ: Requiem, Symphonie funebre et triomphale. Davis/LSO and Chorus/Wandsworth Boys' Choir/Dowd. Philips 416 283-2 (2 CDs).
BERLIOZ: Romeo et Juliette, Symphonie funebre et triomphale. Dutoit/Montreal SO/Quivar/Cupido/Krause/Tudor ensemble. Decca 417 302-2 (2 CDs).

WITH EPIC Wagner so generously covered on compact disc (four complete Ring cycles to date and more threatened) the time is ripe for epic Berlioz. The classic first complete recording of The Trojans, made by Sir Colin Davis in 1969, now arrives in the new medium and like Sir Georg Solti's Ring cycle, similarly refurbished, re-establishes the original thrill of the set with added vividness.

With a 1969 analogue tape, of course, there is a whisper of tape hiss in the transfer, but what is astonishing is the vividness of the sound with voices and instruments very precisely placed, so that you have a keener sense of presence than with most modern digital recordings based on multi-track techniques. Aeneas (Jon Vickers) rushed in for his Narration in Act 1, and the sense of excitement is enhanced by the very movement of the voice on the sound stage.

That and much else that makes the performance compelling reflects the fact that the recording was based on the Covent Garden production. Vickers, only occasionally coarse-grained, is marvellously heroic, but even he is eclipsed by Josephine Veasey as Dido in the second part, The Trojans at Carthage. It is a defiantly commanding portrait fit for an epic.

That inspired performance of The Trojans crowns the whole of Colin Davis's Berlioz cycle, but it is good to have some of the other issues in the series now available on CD too with sound similarly enhanced. Davis's version of the Fantastic Symphony remains the finest of the 17 CDs available of that work. I also warmly recommend the CDs of The Damnation of Faust, made like The Trojans in 1969 and also sounding amazingly fresh and vivid, with a cast led by Nicolai Gedda, Josephine Veasey and Jules Bastin.

Also from 1969 is Davis's version of the Berlioz Requiem, recorded in Westminster Cathedral with sound not quite so brilliant but with the orchestra (the LSO) marvellously full and atmospheric in the spectacular special effects. As on the original LPs, the chorus sings strongly, yet sounds too small for the big outbursts.

The ceremonial Symphonie Funebre et triomphale, done even more persuasively with more of a spring to the march rhythms, comes as an equally generous fill-up for the first CD recording of a shockingly neglected Berlioz masterpiece, the dramatic symphony, Romeo et Juliette. This comes as a welcome addition to the Berlioz series being recorded by Charles Dutoit and the Montreal Orchestra, a strong atmospheric performance given extra bloom in the warm Montreal acoustic.

A US national theatre?

By Michael Goldfarb

WITH the National Theatre celebrating 10 years on the South Bank under Sir Peter Hall, it is a good time to examine the latest failure of our American cousins to establish a similar institution. This was the much ballyhooed, badly planned, woefully underfunded scheme to set up a company at Washington's Kennedy Center which has gone down the tubes after less then two years.

The news arrived in an oblique way. A playwright friend based in London submitted a script and after a long wait received a letter and a fascimile of an article in The Washington Post announcing that American National Theater's artistic director Peter Sellars is "taking a sabbatical" and that all staff are redundant.

There is a fascination in the American cultural establishment with having a National Theatre that has more to do with brand-name recognition and Anglophilia than any imperative from the public. If Britain has a National Theatre, the thinking goes, so should the US, and we can start one just like that. They leave aside the fact that a National Theatre wasn't possible in Britain until Laurence Olivier was transubstantiated from a great actor to living God and that theatre-going is more deeply ingrained in the British.

This particular attempt was as fatuous as any. Although no one asked him too loudly, Kennedy Center chairman, Roger Stevens, 75, one of the most successful producers on Broadway in the Fifties, decided to establish an American National Theater in his massive arts complex on the laughable annual budget of $2 million.

The particulars of the Kennedy Center fiasco are fairly comic. As a Washington critic emeritus said shortly after the plan was announced. "Roger's got the building, he can't very well turn it into a bowling alley."

Sellars was far from the first choice as artistic director but there is a philosophy of management in show business that says if you can't get who you want to do a job then get someone who can get the headlines. Despite his having been fired from his only Broadway job, as director of My One and Only, Sellars came with a reputation as the boy wonder of the American theatre. He even did an episode of Miami Vice.

Undeniably gifted, he has an enormous vocabulary of theatrical styles which he often tries to display at once. He claims Meyerhold as an idol but his work more often resembles that of Ken Russell. He directed a revival of The Count of Monte Cristo, in which a string quartet was seated on stage performing Schnittke. He cast film stars of the moment, some of whom had no stage experience, in major classical roles. All of this in a city where theatre-going is more a civic duty than a cultural activity.

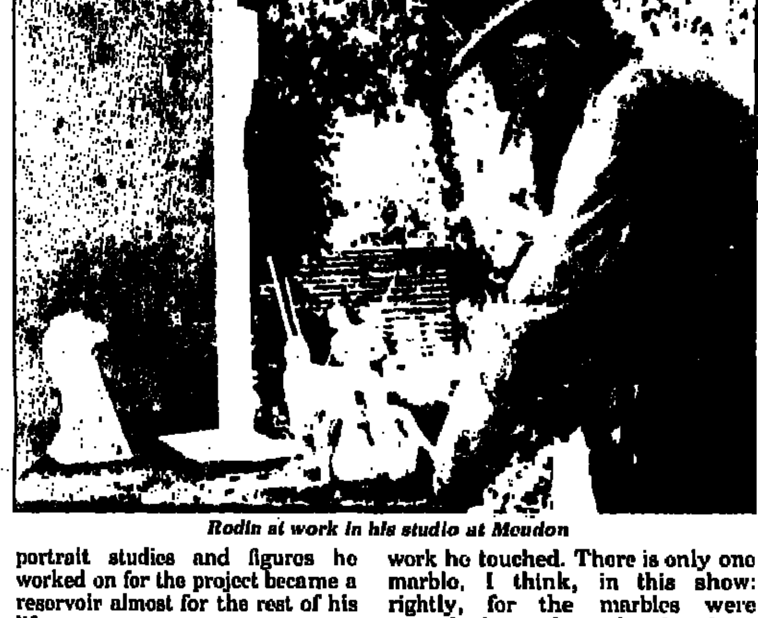
The resulting small houses were inevitable. Now Sellars claims he is off to do a film of Jack Kerouac's On The Road.

Will the US ever have a national theatre? Sir Peter Hall recently told a group of American correspondents that he didn't see the US having a national theatre until the hit/flop mentality of the theatre-going public was changed. Partially true, but since the theatre, like most culture in the US, exists more for commercial than aesthetic reasons, a national theatre will have to wait until commercial interests get their wedge.

Breathing life into the clay

By Michael McNay

THE clay grew tall — in Wilfred Owen's phrase — between Rodin's fingers. He was such a good modeller that it was dangerously close to hubris. The sense of life in anything from a tiny terracotta figure of a baby to the monumental bronze of Balzac is so palpable it's strange that Rodin's wings didn't melt.



Rodin at work in his studio at Meudon

Hubris in another sense as well; the feeling of closeness to life is so strong that in his early days he was accused of casting his Age of Bronze from an actual male figure; and before he was dead (in 1917) he had been rejected as an influence. Art had other irons in the fire.

Still, he was impossible to ignore. He had, as Henry Moore said, almost alone rekindled the art of sculpture. Faced with pictures on a page and an art historical analysis, it is easy enough to place him as a romantic, borrowing images from The Death of Sardanaplaus and The Raft of the Medusa.

And in trying to rehabilitate him as a modern, this leads to a counter confusion: in her otherwise fine catalogue to the Hayward show (the notion, in fact, grew out of the original notion of a book), Catherine Lamport sees in Rodin's The Gates of Hell a precursor of the Cubists in his use of space. But this is to make hindsight itself into a fine art. No artist could be less conceptual than Rodin. His solutions are to the pressing physical problems of sculpture.

Nor is the generalised anguish of his figures very much to the point. The point always was and remains the sense of the human form screwed up so tight that it becomes instinctual, so that Rodin could pick up a small piece of clay between his fingers and turn it within minutes into a living child. From that child springs the rest of his sculpture.

The Gates of Hell is central to this exhibition just as it is to his work. He received the commission for the Decorative Arts Museum in Paris in 1880, when he was 40. Although the gates were finally cast in bronze and remain in the Musée Rodin, the work was never finished. But the hundreds of portrait studies and figures he worked on for the project became a reservoir almost for the rest of his life.

The subject was from Dante — The Thinker who crowns the portal is an imaginary portrait of Dante — but the model was Ghiberti's bronze Gates of Paradise at the Baptistery of Florence Cathedral. The story of Renaissance sculpture was the story of the statue stepping out of the niche; and Rodin's figures, writhing in immortal agony like the figures of the Sistine Last Judgment, are closer to these Renaissance problems than to Cubism or any other ism of the late nineteenth century on, including Impressionism.

And so it has become customary as well to admire Rodin for other qualities than the obvious ones. And it is true that though Rodin's god was Michelangelo, his greatest work often seems more Donatello-inspired, especially the series of wonderful portrait heads made as studies for the Burghers of Calais. The ultimate test for every great artist is how he handles stillness. With Rodin, no problem.

And so today his monumental Balzac is seen as a modern consummation of Egyptian art; when it was unveiled, it was execrated for much the same reason. And its great simplicity of form must have made it seem crude beyond bearing. But it was, I think, D. H. Lawrence who remarked that this Balzac has an almighty erection; there is no evidence for this in the sculpture itself; Balzac's hands are clasped beneath his cloak, that is all. All the lines of the sculpture surge upwards to the leonine head; there can be no question, given the artist, that this was intended as an immense phallus, an outward and visible symbol of creativity.

You don't have to know that Rodin has the reputation of an old goat; his sexuality is there in every work he touched. There is only one marble, I think, in this show: rightly, for the marbles were carved by other hands from Rodin's designs.

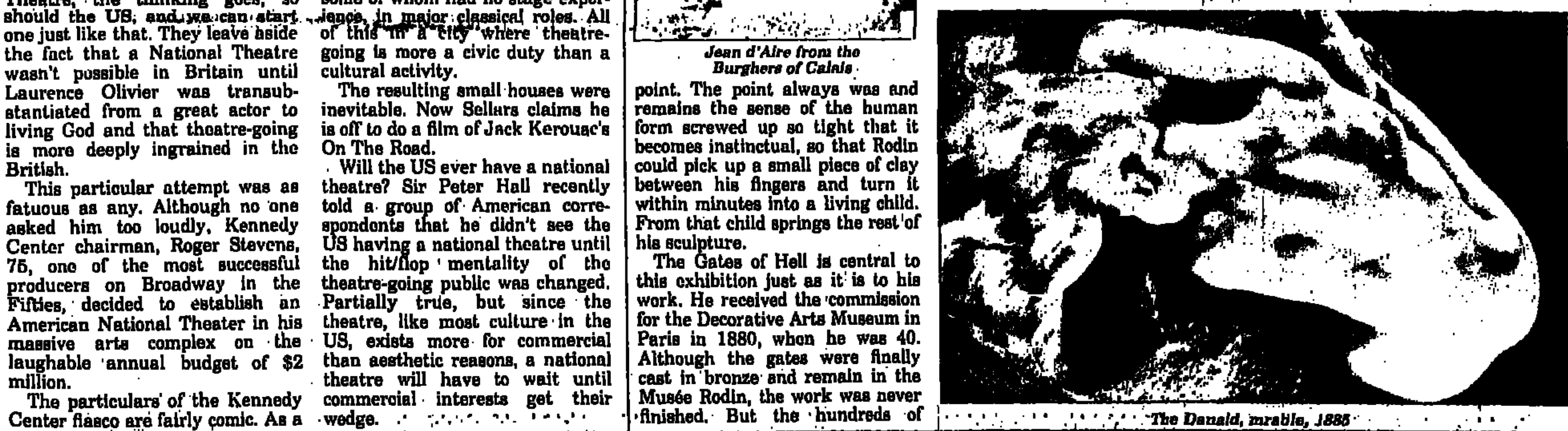
Rodin himself stayed with the warm clay, and with ink and watercolour. For his studies with brush and pen were the basis for his sculpture. He loved women not wisely but too well, and there is a series of ink studies here in which he quite clearly sensually — and, as nearly as possible, sexually — possesses the model.

Some of these he translated into clay and plaster and bronze, scarcely concerned with the form qualities of the work; he had instead a Degas-like fascination with the peculiarities of the human frame, peculiarities amounting in the end to a new perception of beauty. In the case of Degas, the beauty is observed with classical objectivity; Rodin, on the contrary, embraces the forms he creates.

In the end, Rodin was so much in love with the clay that the material took over in a huge blob of a Head For Iris (of 1910) in which the monumentality is imposed upon the sculpture instead of growing from the dictates of anatomy.

And in this period too Rodin asked the model to dance naked before him, and he sketched her without taking his eyes from her, never looking down at the paper. This is an astonishing series, close to Clouzot's filmed sequence of Picasso drawing in light. Maybe, after all, the great Romantic and the great Cubist did have something in common. But it wasn't something you could write a thesis about.

Rodin: Sculpture and Drawings at the Hayward Gallery, London, supported by Pearson plc. Catalogue by Catherine Lampert produced for the Arts Council by Yale University Press (£12.95 paper).



Jean d'Aire from the Burghers of Calais

The Danaid, marble, 1885

Deciding on what Shakespeare wrote

The old St Paul's from the South Bank in the seventeenth century

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE: The Complete Works, edited by Stanley Wells and Gary Taylor (Oxford, £19.95).

John Bayley reviews the new Oxford reconstruction

"SOMEONE has to *decide* what Shakespeare wrote, on the basis of the evidence available at any given time. Editors are the people who decide." The editors of the New Oxford Complete Shakespeare begin their task in this grimly realistic spirit, as if telling us we can't say we haven't been warned. They also disarm us, in Johnsonian fashion, by defining the task of editing as "a total waste of time which periodically reconstructs our image of the past."

These things are obvious, if we pause to reflect on them, but they do not present a hullabaloo in academic circles every time a scene is reshaped on the basis of evidence that has long been available, or a new poem included because ascribed to Shakespeare in some dog-eared poetic miscellany.

A modern editor is also like a modern linguist in that he approaches the words available in the spirit of what is, rather than what ought to be. The great McKerrow and his successor Alice Walker admitted that no edition of Shakespeare can ever be satisfactory, and that "a definitive text will never be established — except by Act of Parliament." In the view of the present editors this is to exaggerate the powers of Parliament.

Then why bother? The only reply is, why not bother? It does no harm periodically to stir up the complacency with which we dip into a complete Shakespeare, and to remind us that the words we read have been mediated by unknown printers and stationers, as well as by famous editors and by time itself. We can "familiarise ourselves with the conditions of Shakespeare's time and try to think like Elizabethans, but we will always remain moderns, acting the part of Elizabethans."

Even a title like Love's Labour's Lost can be spelt and punctuated in four different ways, and nowadays has to be done in one of them, whereas for Shakespeare's audience the three words could be rendered and interpreted in any way he and they pleased.

Acting the part of Elizabethans — indeed acting itself — is of course half the trouble. Shakespeare intended his words to be heard, not read. *Loves labors lost* was written like a piece of music, a score for voices now lost. There is no other case in world literature of such a profound change in mental reception as that which has taken place in our reception of Shakespearean words. An Elizabethan actor might possibly have said something like this:

To be or not to be, I there's the point,
To Die, to sleepe, is that all! I all:
No, to sleepe, to dreame, I mary there it goes,
For in that dreame of death, when we awake,
And borne before an everlasting Judge,
From whence no passenger ever return'd,
The undiscovered country . . .

and so forth; and no auditor would have known enough to be concerned. At the next performance it might well have been different.

The 1603 bad quarto of Hamlet is admittedly corrupt, but where speech and acting are concerned there is no such thing as corruption: an audience in 1603 — and today — who had never read or seen the play before, might well think these words must be the "right" ones.

A modern actor and an Elizabethan actor have at least one thing in common: they are more concerned with the effect they produce in the theatre than with the actual word structure of the play, which can be cut and altered from day to day, and perhaps never more so than when it was first produced.

But now the great change has taken place: Shakespeare is virtually actor-proof. The original mode of transmission and reception has been by-passed. To paraphrase Mallarme's famous line on Poe, printing and editing have turned Shakespeare at last into what he really is.

Or have they? Part of the intention and policy of modern scholarship is to destabilise him again and to keep him destabilised, because only by doing that can the critic and commentator really change our attitudes and modify our view of a scene, a character, a whole play. Shakespeare criticism used to be subjective stuff, weaving its airy fancies round a fixed and definite text. Now it aspires to be objective, and to ground its theories on words that are themselves ever shifting and disputable.

If we can imagine his paying any attention to what has been written about him, Shakespeare himself might well have preferred things that way. That is to say he might have preferred comment on the plays to be based solely on theatrical performance, the text itself not being available to the public.

When his contemporary John Marston's famous play The Malcontent was printed — probably pirated — in 1604, its author wrote that "only one thing afflicts me, to think that scenes invented to be merely spoken, should be enforcively published to be read." Admittedly Marston wrote that in an introduction, so the printer must have let him in on the business, but he and Shakespeare would probably have agreed that the thing was a mistake.

Shakespeare saw none of his plays through the press; any printed in his lifetime were incompetently done; in the year of his death Ben Jonson came out with a handsome collected edition of his own plays, a change of fashion which probably inspired Shakespeare's ex-friends and editors to begin work on the First Folio, though it did not appear till seven years later.

The change, therefore, might be said to be from words to print, and now again in our time, back into words. Modern technology has disrated the printing press, and, it might be asked, who in the coming age is going to lumber himself with a book so thick and weighty that it could only be comfortably read in a pulpit? Floppy discs are all?

Even after three hundred years of print when we think of the lines we hear them in the head, don't see them on the page. The transference is automatic, but in whose voice should we hear them, if they were chiefly listened to on recordings? That is a horrible thought. Print and voice — imaginary voice — must be the best mixture, but are many Shakespearean verbal effects so intricate and delicate that they have never been heard in the theatre but only in the head, in the way that details in some sculptured frieze were not visually accessible to those who first took in the general effect?

However that may be, the editors of this new edition have done a superb job, and produced a handsome text that can be read easily, with effortless concentration, and perpetual slight surprise. They have, in a sense, rewritten Shakespeare on the basis of their own declaration that since we do not know what Shakespeare wrote, someone had to decide.

This principle produces a more effective text, to be heard in the head, than any variorum or note-riddled margin can do. The editors indeed press their principle with remorseless logic, pointing out that even the two long poems — Venus and Adonis and The Rape of Lucrece — which are dedicated and prefaced by the author himself, come to us none the less through the distorting medium of the prestigious stationer who printed them as soon as they were written.

How distorted can be seen from the fact that the same printer, Richard Field, brought out Sir John Harington's poems, and of these we still possess the manuscripts, which differ from the printed text in a thousand features of wording and spelling.

Except for a highly dubious fragment of Sir Thomas More no Shakespearean *manuscript* survives, and it is ironical that the only words he *certainly* wrote — the dedications of his poems to the Earl of Southampton — are not included in any concordance.

The Oxford editors have included in their meticulous collection a complete double text of King Lear — the Quarto and Folio separate and unconflated — reflecting the modern view that The History of King Lear represents the play as it was originally written, and The Tragedy of King Lear in the 1623 Folio the play as Shakespeare afterwards substantially revised it.

We also have All Is True, which used to be called Henry VIII, The Two Noble Kinsmen, a reconstructed text of Pericles, and brief accounts of the lost plays Cardenio and Loves Labors Won. Cardenio is now thought unlikely to turn up, but Loves Labors Won may appear again any day: it was printed in quite a large number of copies.

Unquiet Graves

By John Ezard

ROBERT GRAVES: THE ASSAULT HEROIC, 1895-1926, by Richard Perceval Graves (Weidenfeld & Nicolson, £14.95).

ROBERT GRAVES was a weak schoolboy who got his confidence at Charterhouse first through boxing, then through climbing — with his teacher George Mallory — a quarry face at his parents' holiday home in Harlech. "Once I lost my foothold on a ledge and should have been killed: but it seemed as though I improvised a foothold in the air and kicked myself up to safety by it," he wrote.

By some such knack, the shell-shocked, wounded, phobia-ridden young veteran of Loos and the Somme outlived his first world war generation, in which he was only two years younger than Wilfred Owen, who attended his wedding. In 1924, Mallory was lost with Irvine after (perhaps) conquering Everest. Graves then said, again revealingly, "Anyone who climbed with George felt convinced that he did get to the summit."

He wrote of his own "wartime technique of getting through things somehow, anyhow". He maintained the strength both to turn out the generally potboiling prose which brought in the money and to write some of the most rejoicingly perfect love lyrics of the century.

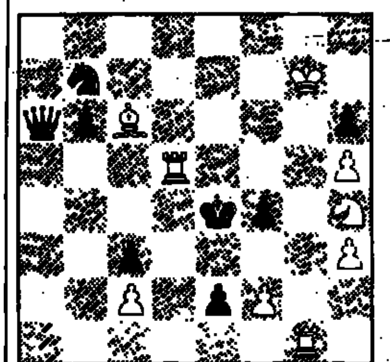
This first abundant volume of gently paced, clear biography by his nephew leaves him sailing in 1926 to begin a Cairo professorship for which he was sponsored by T. E. Lawrence, Arnold Bennett, the Poet Laureate Robert Bridges and John Buchan.

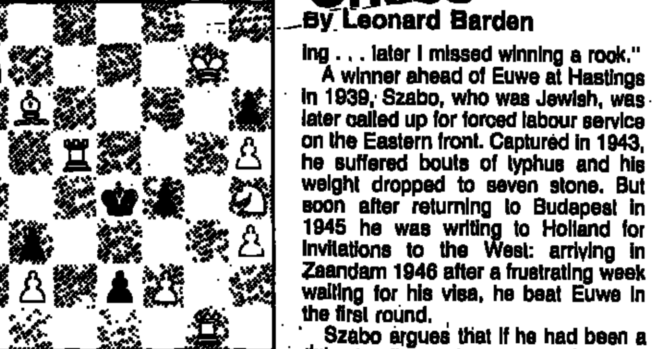
Richard Graves has nearly another 60 years to cover. But he does tell us that the conjunction of the war and his Irish-German ancestry came back to haunt Robert in extreme old age. "He talked with immense sadness and regret of having 'killed Germans'." Only then did the spear of faith, tongue-like sword and round shield of laughter which he had made in youth fail him.

Chess

By Leonard Barden

No. 1932





White mates in three moves, against any defence (by W. Grimshaw, 1854). A problem classic, with a remarkable key and play.

Solution No. 1931

White K at KR1, Q at Q7, Rs at K1 and KN3, Bs at QR4 and QR1, Ns at K2 and KR3, P at Q4. Black K at K5, R at QB3, B at QR7, Ns at Q3 and K3, Ps at KN5 and KN2. Mate in two.

1 P-Q5 (threat 2 QxN) N-KB4 2 N-B2, *or if* N-QB5 2 B-B2, *or if* N(Q3) other or BxP 2 N-Q4, or if N-Q5 2 N-B3, or if N(K3) other 2 N(2)-B4, or if KxP 2 QxR.

LASZLO SZABO of Hungary was among the great names of international chess in the 1950s and 1960s. Three times a world title candidate, he played an imaginative and powerful tactical game and was frequently a high prize winner in major competitions. Szabo's newly published autobiography *My Best Games of Chess* (Pergamon, £7.95) contains 124 of the grandmaster's battles, many annotated in depth. With engaging frankness, he recounts his own weaknesses, notably a tendency to crack up under pressure.

At the 1948 Saltsjobaden Interzonal, Szabo's rival for first prize, Bronstein, was physically attacked by a spectator during the last round, but in the hubbub and confusion it was Szabo who blundered a key pawn in his own game. Then at the 1953 Zurich candidates he saw the chance of a decisive attack, even forced a mate, if Reshevsky castled. "Unexpectedly, Reshevsky grabbed the knight, and his nervous . . . move swept me along so that instead of giving mate as I planned, I took his bishop in turn. The mating position was over. I just sat there, shook my head, and was unable to make a single move for a whole hour. . . . It was a horrifying feeling . . . later I missed winning a rook."

A winner ahead of Euwe at Hastings in 1939, Szabo, who was Jewish, was later called up for forced labour service on the Eastern front. Captured in 1943, he suffered bouts of typhus and his weight dropped to seven stone. But soon after returning to Budapest in 1945 he was writing to Holland for invitations to the West: arriving in Zaandam 1946 after a frustrating week waiting for his visa, he beat Euwe in the first round.

Szabo argues that if he had been a little steadier against weaker players at critical moments of his career, he could have achieved still greater successes. At the Amsterdam candidates of 1956 he lost twice to tail-enders, and it was just those two points which separated him from the winner Smyslov at the finish. His best games show a remarkable zest and energy, as in this win with comments based on Szabo's own in his highly recommended and readable book.

Laszlo Szabo (Hungary) — *Ero Book (Finland)*
Catalan Opening
(Saltsjobaden 1948)

1 N-KB3 P-Q4	2 P-KN3 N-KB3
3 B-N2 P-K3	4 O-O B-K2
5 P-B4 O-O	6 P-Q4 P-B3
7 [illegible]	8 N-K5 B-R3

Black should have controlled his K4 by 7 . . . QN-Q2. Now if 8 . . . B-N2 9 P-K4! with a positional advantage.

9 PxP BPxP 10 B-B4 KN-Q2?

With P-K4 no longer such a threat, Black should have retreated B-N2 to assist the development of his QN. After the text, Szabo analysed the complex 11 NxQP!? PxN 12 NxP! RxN 13 BxP N-QB3 14 BxN N-B3 15 BxR QxB but preferred a quieter plan: "a decision, rare in my practice, of avoiding risks."

11 R-B1 NxN 12 BxN P-QN4?

Here B-N2 was still preferable, but Black expected his pawn move would force 13 P-QR3.

13 P-K4! P-N5	14 N-K2 Q-R4
15 PxP PxP	16 N-B4! BxR
17 Q-N4!	

The key move. It forces a fatal weakening of Black's K-side pawns, since 17 . . . P-B3 falls to 18 BxP ch K-R1 19 N-N6 ch PxN 20 Q-R4 mate.

17 . . . P-N3	18 BxP B-Q6
19 BxR B-KB4	20 Q-K2 B-N4

The undefended bishop must move, because if N-Q2 21 B-B7 QxP 22 B-Q5 or 21 . . . Q-R5 22 B-B6 wins a piece.

21 P-KR4 BxN 22 BxB N-Q2

If Black wins back a pawn by QxP he loses N-Q2 after 23 B-R6 R-Q1? 24 Q-K5.

23 B-B3 B-K3 24 B-Q6 Resigns.

The rook has nowhere to hide. If R-K1 25 P-Q5 or if R-Q1 25 B-B7.

A COUNTRY DIARY

CAITHNESS: For those of us fortunate to know the flow country of the northern Highlands, it has always appeared to be an area that could never be threatened. Admittedly it is grazed and occasionally, in parts, burned; but the vast peatlands that have been 8,000 years in the making could surely never change unless the climate drastically altered. This natural habitat is so globally rare, which was one of the reasons the northern Highlands were identified in the World Conservation Strategy. If you walk this flow country of Caithness or Sutherland at this time of year, you can go hours without seeing a single bird; but in summer it supports internationally important numbers of breeding birds. The rapid notes of greenshank echo the flats with the trill of the dunlin and the "squeaky gate" note of the golden plover. Great and Arctic skuas will mob you within their territory while on the lochs and lochans the black-throated and red-throated divers utter their wailing cries which are supposed to indicate rain. Common scoter and wigeon haunt the smaller lochans while there is always the possibility of seeing wood sandpiper, Temminck's stint, whimbrel, or even a red-necked phalarope. Fewer than 10 years ago the economics of widespread conifer plantations would have had little credence. Yet now more than 67,000 hectares of land are owned by forestry interests, mainly acquired in the last four to five years. The reason: heavy grants and tax incentives. Thus is not to say that there should be no forestry in these two districts, but it should be in the right place and for the right reasons. If all the forestry-owned land was planted, 250 pairs of greenshank would be lost, some 25 per cent of the British population.

Ray Collier

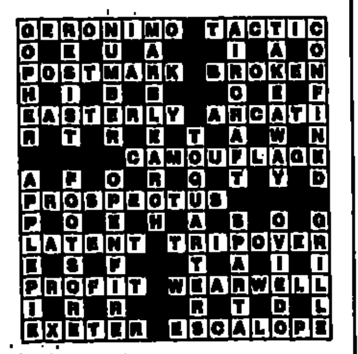
ARAUCARIA

ACROSS

1. Sort of sports with ammunition, showing broken vessels (9).
6. Chance of the French coming in before the Bench? (3, 2).
9. Regular job for 11 — get child flushed out (9, 6).
10, 4. Makings of a mountain? (8).
11. Exhibit skill with kite (8).
14. Draw idly on computer error by 11 (9).
15. Tree that makes even 11 (5).
16. Indian sage has some Irish influence (5).
18. Beloved, it forms coloured couch for piece of garden (6, 3).
20. Mean to mix drug with a lot of ginger (8).
21. See 24.
25. Barrel with pulpy base, having accommodation for cultivated fungi (6, 9).
26. It took place in the 70s (5).
27. Phrase suggesting the root of all evil is a high interest rate (4, 5).

DOWN

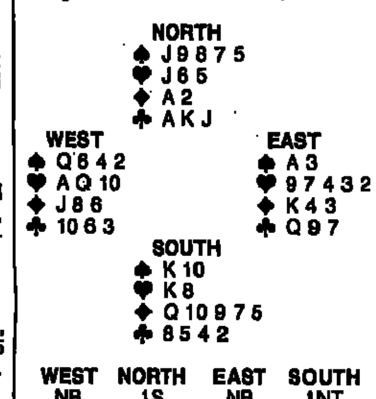
1. Witch's 11, over 1,000? Be like that! (5).
2. Moor, Oxfordshire one — greeting (7).
3. Two repeats and it's dead (4).
4. See 10.
5. Making hay, weight with a lock (10).
6. 11 for Egyptian entertained by Jersey saint (10).
7. Fixed beliefs: put "friend" on carpet first (7).
8. Top of tube in 11, in relation to the publicity (5, 4).
12. 11 ruined by gin in milk transport (6-4).
13. Sailor at cooker before morning with journalist previously mentioned (5-5).
14. Actress cut short in the same place by the French 11 (9).
17. 11 in service in the mill? (7).
19. 11 dance with nothing on (7).
22. Miller's answer? (5).
23. Continent like 1 across initially (4).
24, 21. Car simply asked to be stamped on (8).



Bridge

By Rixi Markus©

GAMES and slams tend to attract a disproportionate amount of attention from bridge columnists, but some of the most interesting hands which I come across at the table are played in part-score contracts. Here is a typical example from the 1986 Deauville Bridge Festival. Dealer West; love all.



NORTH
♠ J 9 8 7 5
♥ J 6 5
♦ A 2
♣ A K J

WEST
♠ Q 6 4 2
♥ A Q 10
♦ J 8 6
♣ 10 6 3

EAST
♠ A 3
♥ 9 7 4 3 2
♦ K 4 3
♣ Q 9 7

SOUTH
♠ K 10
♥ K 8
♦ Q 10 9 7 5
♣ 8 5 4 2

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
NB	1S	NB	1NT
NB	NB	NB	

When my partner, Stefan Ballan, was the declarer in 1NT, West led the three of clubs. South did well to go up with dummy's ace, rather than permit East to win with the queen of clubs and find the awkward heart switch. He then played the ace and another diamond and East, who was anxious to establish his heart suit while he still had the ace of spades as an entry, went in with the king of diamonds, and switched to a heart. West played the queen, ace, and a third heart to establish East's long cards in the suit, but the defenders still had only six tricks to cash when declarer led a spade towards the kind in the closed hand.

East's impatient play of the king of diamonds was premature, but my partner would almost certainly have guessed correctly even if East had played low perfectly smoothly: the J-x-x and K-x-x holdings in the defenders' hands are all equally likely, but there is an additional advantage to be gained by going up with the queen of diamonds on the second round. In that it will produce four tricks in the suit whenever West has J-x.

At another table, Fritz Kubak of Austria was the declarer in the same contract of 1NT, and West once again found an opening club lead. Having gone up with a top club from dummy, Kubak decided to ignore the diamond suit and concentrate his attention on the spades instead. He played a small spade to the king and a second spade to the jack and ace. East switched to a heart, and West played the queen, ace and a third heart to dummy's jack. A third round of spades was taken by West's queen, and he exited woodenly with his last spade, leaving the following position:

NORTH
♠ J
♥ —
♦ A 2
♣ K J

WEST
♠ —
♥ —
♦ J 8 6
♣ 10 6

EAST
♠ —
♥ 9
♦ K 4
♣ Q 9

SOUTH
♠ —
♥ —
♦ Q 10 9 7
♣ 8

When the last spade from dummy brought another heart discard from East, Kubak had little difficulty in reading the end position correctly. He exited with the ace and another diamond, compelling East to concede the last two tricks in clubs and making eight tricks in all.

The Deauville festival included a four-team contest on Vu-Graph between Austria, Belgium, Holland and France. This was a hand which caused a great deal of discussion:

WEST
♠ A K Q 7
♥ A K 8 4
♦ A 9 8 3 2
♣ —

EAST
♠ 10 2
♥ Q 10 9 7 6 5 3
♦ J
♣ K 9 3

Surprisingly, only the Austrian pair of Rohan and Felchtinger reached the laydown contract of 7H; they did so by way of their Blue Club system and its control-showing bids. The French pair missed the grand slam after West had opened the bidding with 1D. In my view, the West hand is much too strong for a one-bid: the powerful distribution and six quick tricks make it well worth an opening bid of 2C, after which East can certainly begin to visualise a possible grand slam.